An exploration of the evidence surrounding the identity of the last captive Thylacine

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ABSTRACT

The last known captive Thylacine (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*) died at the Beaumaris Zoo on Hobart's Queen's Domain on the evening of Monday the 7th September 1936. However, within six months of its death the date of its capture was being inaccurately reported. Over the ensuing years there has been much debate and controversy relating to its source, sex, period of display, welfare, and more recently the fate of its remains. Whilst there has been some agreement, significant confusion has been created by the disparate, fragmentary, and often contradictory sources of evidence, with five distinctly exclusive provenances proposed for this specimen. For a species whose extinction was hastened by anthropogenic interventions, we have a moral obligation to preserve as much factual detail as possible about the Thylacine. To this end, the authors have undertaken a thorough review of the hypotheses advanced by Smith (1981) & Paddle (2000); Guiler (1986) & Bailey (2001); Sleightholme *et al.*, 2020; Linnard *et al.*, 2020 and Paddle & Medlock (2023), and have evaluated each against a synthesis of the evidence accrued over the previous 93 years to examine whether a definitive identification and history of the last known captive Thylacine can be determined. The authors found a sufficiently strong correlation between the evidence and the position advanced by Linnard *et al.*, (2020) to maintain that the last captive Thylacine can be identified as the juvenile male captured at Penney's Flats on the Arthur River by 19 year old Roy and 59 year old Dan Delphin on the evening of Monday 7th July 1930.

Key words: Thylacine, Thylacinus cynocephalus, Beaumaris Zoo (Hobart), Last captive, Museum specimens.

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Introduction

Following the death of the last captive Thylacine at the Beaumaris Zoo[1] in 1936, there has been considerable debate relating to its source, sex, period of display, welfare, and the fate of its remains, with contemporary commentators and later researchers advancing differing scenarios. Much of what has been surmised in the past appears to have been based on the misinterpretation of secondary or third hand accounts skewed with the passage of time or an incomplete understanding of the Hobart City Council Reserves Committee (HCCRC)[2] records. Unfortunately, these failings have resulted in the propagation of falsities which have now become embedded in the literature as truths. In an attempt to separate the wheat from the chaff, the authors examine each of the five rival capture and display scenarios and provide evidence to eliminate the erroneous contenders. Issues relating to the welfare of the last Thylacine on display at Beaumaris are also considered, as they are relevant to the perception of the species in its final days.

Dating conundrums

Chronological errors abound in historical research, as do the bones of disproven hypotheses based on the uncritical acceptance of single source evidence. Several commentators with a definite contemporary connection to the zoo, or to its confirmed Thylacine suppliers, demonstrate the fallibility of witness recall regarding the chronology of events surrounding the last captive Thylacine (see: Appendix for a summary of the previous hypotheses and witness statements). On the 8th March 1936, William J. Rennie (Alderman and member of the HCCRC) suggested that the last captive Thylacine had been present at the zoo for ten years[3]. Paddle (2000) quotes Alison Reid, perhaps the most proximate witness to events at Beaumaris until mid-1936, as stating that the last captive arrived "*...about a year before my father died*", implying a date of around 1934[4]. Reid (Sargent *et al.*, 1996) also stated that the last captive had been acquired from "*up Tyenna way*" and that after its arrival "*we lost every tiger*", implying other Thylacines were still present at the zoo at that time, a situation which did not exist after November 1929[5]. A further witness, Will Cramp[6] (Rheinberger, 2013) stated that the last Thylacine was a solitary male who had died alone after having been previously kept with a female some years before. Paddle (2000) cites a 1954 interview with Algernon Chaplin[7] in which he stated that Churchill had made his capture "*twenty years ago*", suggesting a retrospective date of 1934. It is also possible to draw erroneous support across these various testimonies. Rennie's implied date of 1926 could be taken as support for Reid's statement that the last captive had entered the zoo whilst other specimens were still present, and both statements could be cited in support of the position advocated by Guiler (1986) and Bailey (2001). Reid's alternative estimated arrival date of 1934 would, as Paddle (2000) suggested when advocating an arrival date of 1933, appear to be supported by Chaplin's 1954 statement which dates the Churchill capture to that year. However, all such conclusions can be excluded by primary evidence.

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[1] Unless otherwise stated, all references to Beaumaris Zoo should be taken to refer to its second municipal incarnation located on the Queen's Domain (Hobart) from 1923 to 1937.

[2] With the exception of a two year hiatus between June 1932 and May 1934, the HCCRC oversaw Beaumaris' finances from the council's acceptance of the collection from the Roberts estate in 1922 until its eventual closure in 1937. The committee was disbanded in 1932, with the council attending to its own finances until the 13/2/1933. After which, and up until May 1934, responsibility for the city's reserves, including Beaumaris Zoo, was transferred to the council's Health Committee. In June 1934, the HCCRC was reformed to resume its original role.

[3] *The Mercury*, 9/3/1937, p.2.

[4] Arthur Reid died on the 13/12/1935 (*The Mercury*, 14/12/1935, p.9).

The myth of 1933

The most enduring misconception regarding the acquisition and death of the last captive Thylacine is that one or both of these events occurred in 1933. The confusion regarding the date of its death was resolved by Smith (1981) after recovering an entry in the HCCRC minutes of the 16th September 1936, confirming that the last captive Thylacine died at the Beaumaris Zoo on the evening of the 7th September 1936:

> *"The Superintendent of Reserves reported that the Tasmanian tiger died on Monday evening last, 7th instant, and the body has been forwarded to the Museum".*

Prior to Smith's retrieval of this record, the year of death was generally given as 1933. However, the date of acquisition was often quoted as occurring in the same year, an error which the authors argue originated with Michael Sharland's 1962 work *Tasmanian Wildlife* in which he states:

> *"The last known Tiger exhibited alive in Hobart was taken, however, in a trapper's snare in the Florentine Valley, a few miles west of Mt. Field National Park, in 1933".*

In retrospect, a focus on the year 1933 was not continuously preserved, nor was it contemporaneously referred to by those who went on to cite it several decades later. This is especially true of Sharland, who would provide two dates for the last captive's entry and two for its death. In *The Mercury* of the 20th February 1937 (p.5), Sharland retrospectively implied that the last of the zoos Thylacines was acquired in 1928:

> *"The last one died in the Hobart Zoo some months ago, after having lived for eight years".*

Significantly, an identical error was contained in a letter from Cecil Ryan[8] to the State Premier Albert Ogilvie[9], extracts of which were published in *The Mercury* ten days earlier[10]:

> *"...the single animal which had been in the Beaumaris Zoo for some eight years having died recently".*

The minutes of a Fauna Board meeting of the 9th February 1937 (Libraries Tasmania: AA592) confirm that Ryan was merely acting on behalf of his cousin Albert Le Souëf, the Director of Taronga Park Zoo (1916-1939), to advocate the preservation and captive breeding of the Thylacine:

> *"Further correspondence was read with respect to the protection of the Thylacinus. Proposals were made through the Zoological Society of New South Wales and by Mr. Le Souëf of Taronga Park Zoo for endeavour to breed from the animals in captivity. Mr Ryan of Pioneer[11] wrote on the subject forwarding the views of Mr. Le Souëf."*

Given that Ryan was simply reiterating Le Souëf's '*views*', it appears the belief the Thylacine had been present for eight years was held by the latter. In 1937, Sharland and Le Souëf were resident in Sydney and both were members of the Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales. Consequently, it is impossible to determine if Sharland simply obtained the date from the article in *The Mercury*, or whether he had been responsible for the error which he subsequently passed on to Le Souëf. Irrespective of whether he paraphrased Ryan's date, or was its originator, Sharland's public citation of an incorrect arrival date confirms that as early as 1937, if he had ever been aware of the 'true' date, he no longer retained that knowledge. Consequently, his later statements on the subject should no longer be regarded as those of an authoritative primary witness.

The next three decades would see the construction of a consensus that the year 1933 was relevant to the period of display of the last captive Thylacine[12]. All the evidence suggests that the focus on 1933 initially arose, not through a misunderstanding of the year of its arrival, but the year of its death. In July 1936, the naturalist Alec Chisholm who visited Beaumaris in 1933 stated[13]:

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[5] The HCCRC minutes recorded the death of the last of the 1920s Thylacine's displayed at the zoo on the 1/11/1929.

[6] Cramp was a regular Sunday visitor to Beaumaris as a child, and recalled being allowed to participate in the keeper's routine.

[7] Chaplin is listed in the Electoral Rolls as a resident of the Derwent Valley between 1914 & 1943 and as a resident of Tyenna in 1922, 1928 & 1936.

[8] Cecil Godfrey Ryan (1866-1954), Hydro-electric pioneer.

[9] State Premier (22/6/1934 – 10/6/1939).

[10] *The Mercury*, 10/02/1937, p.12.

[11] Town in north-east Tasmania.

[12] Both Chisholm and Fleay visited Beaumaris in 1933, the year in which the most recognisable photographic images of the species were created.

[13] *The Australasian*, 25/7/1936, p.73.

> *"I know, the only specimen in captivity is in the Hobart Zoo - at least, it was there a couple of years ago".*

In October 1936, in the first public reference to the last captive's death, Chisholm described it as having occurred "*some time ago*"[14]. In 1937, the zoologist David Fleay[15] referred to its "*recent demise*" and Sharland[16] that it had occurred "*some months ago*". Yet, by 1962 all three men would state that its death occurred in 1933, or in Fleay's case, have such a statement attributed to him. The contradiction of their contemporary statements and their subsequent consensus over the same erroneous date is unlikely to be coincidental or to have been made independently. Sharland, Fleay, and Chisholm undoubtedly knew each other. The authors suggest that as their recollections became less precise they were influenced by errors in one another's writing and argue that this process is traceable through their respective publications between 1939 and 1950. In 1945, Chisholm first cited the year of death as 1933[17]. In 1939, Sharland described the death as occurring in "*…about 1935*"[18]. By 1940, Fleay described it as occurring: "*…not so many months after my visit*"[19], implying a date in early 1934. Yet by 1950[20], he too was also quoted as stating the death occurred in 1933.

The earliest reference to a 1933 acquisition date comes from Sharland (1962). Illustrating the inherent weakness of his position, he continued to adhere to the belief that the last captive also died in 1933, implying that it was displayed at Beaumaris for less than 12 months. However, this assumption runs contrary to the photographic record confirming the animal's presence at the zoo for at least 68 months. From the evident confusion, it becomes apparent that no party whose retrospective statements were cited in the literature retained an accurate recollection of the term of the last Thylacine's captivity. Why 1933 transitioned from the year of death to the year of both arrival and death is unclear; however, there is no evidence to indicate that it was based on further information. As such, the authors would suggest that its spontaneous appearance in 1962 is suspiciously reminiscent of a typographical error.

Contextualising the death of the last captive

Of direct relevance to the alternative capture scenarios and questions regarding the animal's welfare, the value of the last captive Thylacine as a live exhibit and dead specimen requires clarification, as does the history of legislation passed on the species during the 1930s.

The price for a dead Thylacine reached £10 in 1928[21], and a body would have been worth considerably more in 1936. It is within the competition for these specimens between Sir Colin MacKenzie[22], his Tasmanian supplier (James Harrison), and the State's public institutions, that the explanation can be found for all legislation passed on the Thylacine between the granting of partial protection in 1930 and full legal protection on 1st July 1936.

By the 1930s, Thylacines (dead or alive) had become all but impossible for Hobart's institutions to procure. Prior to the arrival of the Delphin male in October 1930, Beaumaris had been unable to obtain a Thylacine since August 1925, and the last contemporaneously traceable wild specimen received by the Tasmanian Museum (TMAG) was that obtained from Paddy Hartnett in July 1926[23], it being the last recorded wild Thylacine from the southern half of the State. The Museum's Director Clive Lord[24] confirmed the former point in 1929[25], when he stated:

> "*…neither the zoo or the museum had been able to get a specimen during the past three years*".

Providing support for the latter, in *The Mercury* of the 12th February 1930 (p.8) Lord stated that:

> "*….he had not received a Thylacine for four years*[26]".

James Harrison by contrast had been in possession of between at least three to five live specimens around 1928 alone[27]. The following year without naming Harrison[28], Lord identified the threat to the museum's ability to obtain specimens at a meeting of the Animal & Birds Protection Board (*The Mercury*, 15th May 1929, p.8):

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[14] *The Australasian*, 3/10/1936, p.50.

[15] *Table Talk*, 1/10/1937, p.37.

[16] *The Mercury*, 20/2/1937, p.5.

[17] *The Herald*, 30/10/1945, p.4.

[18] *The Mercury*, 25/3/1939, p.5.

[19] *The Australasian*, 30/3/1940, p.36.

[20] *The Argus*, 23/3/1950, p.8.

[21] HCCRC: 27/3/1928. Records the sale of the body of a female Thylacine to "*the Museum*" for £10. The authors note that this sum is less than that noted by Reid in the HCCRC minutes of 10/4/1935.

[22] Surgeon, Anatomist and Vice-President of the Royal Zoological & Acclimatisation Society of Victoria.

[23] TMAG A1298 – male taxidermy specimen.

[24] Clive Lord's tenure at TMAG ended in 1933.

[25] *The Mercury*, 15/5/1929, p.8.

[26] Given Lord's comments were made in the context of a discussion of the species rarity, and that their timing corresponds exactly to the receipt of the Hartnett animal in 1926 (*The Mercury*, 27/10/1926, p.8), the authors argue that they should be interpreted as referring to specimens obtained from the wild.

[27] Harrison's notebook of the 11/5/1928 records a sale to McKenzie for £50. This sum is listed in a further entry against a Thylacine. An undated entry records an order for three Thylacines at £75 each from Perry Bros Circus, a £50 payment is recorded from the circus in a subsequent entry. *The Daily Telegraph* of the 17/12/1929 (p.6) reports that by this time the circus were in possession of two specimens. Harrison is also known to have purchased live specimens from Chester and Hope (*Advocate*, 20/3/1928, p.4) and Jordan (1987). However, it is unclear whether these were the specimens already listed.

[28] Local reputation also confirmed Harrison's control of the market. North-west resident Fred Kinnane noted: "*He more or less cornered the market and decimated the animal*" (Hodgkinson, 1982), whilst Wilfred Batty, referred to him as "*Tiger Harrison*" (Brass, 1980).

> *"One man had secured a corner in them, and neither the Zoo nor the Museum had been able to get a specimen during the past three years. If placed on the protected list, the position would be safeguarded".*

In 1928, in an attempt to counter Harrison monopolising the market, Lord suggested placing the species on the totally protected list[29]:

> *"Prices paid by mainland and other institutions make it almost impossible for Tasmanian Museums and Zoos to secure specimens. Should the animals be placed on the totally protected list and application made to destroy same on any area, the permit could be granted by the Department, provided the animal when caught, be sold to the Department at a fixed price; the Department could then sell it at a profit to the Tasmanian National institutions. As practically all Thylacines are now on crown land, the above suggestion merely means that Tasmania would retain its own possessions".*

Whilst his request for full protection was not granted, by 1930[30] the Federal authorities had acted and imposed a ban on the export of Thylacines outside of Australia. Further, on the 11th March 1930, the Fauna Board resolved to recommend to the State government that legislation be passed prohibiting the species' export outside of Tasmania. The minutes of a Fauna Board meeting of the 6th May 1930 noted that this recommendation had been adopted and published in the *Government Gazette*. Though these legislative changes had the potential to impact on Harrison's ability to supply Thylacines to MacKenzie in Melbourne[31], a legal restriction on the movement of a species required that it be at least partially protected[32]. To this end, the Thylacine was granted partially protected status in 1930 under an amendment to *The Animals and Birds Protection Act (1928)* with hunting prohibited during December[33]. As Lord's comments in *The Mercury* and within his letter of 1928 make abundantly clear, his request was primarily motivated by the desire to protect the ability of Tasmania's institutions to acquire further specimens, not to protect the species in the wild[34]. The partial protection granted in 1930 should also be seen in these terms. The authors argue that the pragmatic nature of this approach is likely to explain the reluctance to place the Thylacine on the fully protected list, or to accede to Lord's request that permits be issued for its hunting[35]. Despite its high commercial value, no Thylacine capture of the 1920s or 1930s is known to have been made purposely. Instead, they were obtained as an opportune bycatch from wallaby snaring[36], meaning that all such captures were not anticipated. Consequently, making the application for and pre-purchase of a license for such a rare and unanticipated[37] event an additional expense that few are likely to have thought necessary, thereby creating a potential legal obstacle to the production of any chance Thylacine capture to a State institution.

Pricing

Central to establishing the correct identity of the last captive Thylacine is the determination of a plausible purchase price. Prior to the acquisition of the last captive, the zoo had previously purchased between 2 (Guiler, 1986), 10 (Linnard *et al.*, 2020) and 28 (Paddle, 2012) Thylacines. Previous estimates of the numbers of Thylacines purchased by the HCCRC have failed to examine the context provided by these prior purchases to establish an evidence based price point for the species. Hampering such a determination, no archival material exists from the zoo itself. The sole contemporary primary source documenting its purchases are the minutes of the HCCRC, the body responsible for purchasing the zoo's stock and overseeing the maintenance of its grounds and enclosures. However, the HCCRC is a record of the council's spending on all of its physical assets and Thylacines do not feature prominently within them[38]. The only information pertaining to a live specimen throughout the period of the zoo's operation appears in a report from the 12th July 1935. Referring to the cost of the animal's feed it states: "*1 Tas. Wolf 3lbs each (3lbs.) .. 8* " (shillings)". Within the records, only one Thylacine purchase is identified on the day it was made[39]. Until 1932, the fortnightly spending summaries contain no indication of what the payments recorded were made for, providing only the amount paid and the name of the payee. The expected purchase of a Thylacine is referred to outside the payment lists on only two further occasions:

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[29] Letter to Col. John Lord, 27/3/1928, Animal & Bird Protection Board Papers, Libraries Tasmania.

[30] *Examiner*, 1/3/1930, p.9

[31] The Fauna Board minutes of the 8/12/1931 record that Harrison had written to enquire as to what legislation was in place regarding the Thylacine suggesting that he was unaware of the export restriction whilst in possession of the Kaine juvenile, the last evidentially supported specimen in his possession.

[32] Fauna Board Minutes, AA592, 11/2/1930, Libraries Tasmania.

[33] *The Mercury*, 1/12/1931, p.5.

[34] Lord would have been aware that effective protection in the wild would have been impossible, as due to the chance nature of Thylacine captures, it would have equated to a ban on game trapping in the north-west, a request which would never have been granted on economic and political grounds.

[35] Examination of the *Government Gazette* revealed no references to a license being required to hunt Thylacines between January and November 1930-1936 (Haygarth, pers. com., 8/1/2023).

[36] Haygarth, 2017[a] presents evidence that the majority of Thylacines were captured in this manner, whilst Linnard (2023[a]) found no evidence that any contemporaneously recorded captures from 1920 onwards were made intentionally.

[37] The likelihood of a Thylacine capture is partially illustrated by the number of game skins registered between 1923 and 1927 from *The Mercury*, 12/1/1928, p.7 (italics), as opposed to the number of contemporaneously recorded Thylacine captures (brackets) from Linnard (2023a): 1923: *1,040,748* (7); 1924: *473,438* (4); 1925: *853,942* (1); 1926: *845,002* (4) & 1927: *775,353* (0). Both sets of figures are likely to be unrepresentative of the total number of captures in either category.

[38] The HCCRC minutes are described by Paddle (2012) and Paddle & Medlock (2023) as an "*archive*" of the zoo. The authors argue that an important distinction must be made. As has been stated, the HCCRC minutes supply an overview of Hobart's municipal assets, and as it incurred significant costs the zoo is frequently referred to. However, the minutes rarely provide detailed information regarding its operation or stock.

1. On the 3rd July 1923, £25 was approved for the adult Loveluck (not identified by name) specimen, whilst the payment was made between the 11th – 25th September 1923.

2. On the 21th July 1925, the purchase of the juvenile Murray (identified by name) female was confirmed for £25, whilst the payment was made between the 4th – 18th August 1925.

Aside from a reference to the death of the Delphin specimen, the entirety of the information provided for the remaining five evidentiary supported specimens[40] is:

- Churchill (1) – *"O'May W. P. 25.0.0"*,

- Harrison (3) – *"Harrison Jas. 46.5.0"*,

- Delphin (1) – *"Delphin, R. 25.0.0"*.

Beyond these entries, there is no further reference to these individuals. The only additional entries for the remaining six is represented by:

- The discussion of the transfer of two unidentified specimens to London, referred to as *"a pair of Tasmanian wolves"* on the 5/5/1925,

- A single reference to the death of an unidentified female on 27/3/1928,

- A reference to the death of an unidentified specimen stated only to have been *"about six"* on the 1/11/1929, and reiterated twice in 1930,

- A reference on 10/4/1935 to the fate of the bodies of two unidentified individuals which died around 1928.

Whilst the HCCRC minutes can be examined for evidence of appropriate payments to eliminate spurious claims, reliance on the minutes alone to identify Thylacine acquisitions is a fallacy, as such purchases can only be identified through referencing additional evidence. Consequently, the authors argue that a Thylacine purchase should only be proposed when the payment of an evidenced based sum can be evidentially linked to further testimony. Using this method, the authors found a 100%[41] correlation between a price point of £25 (or £10 for maternally dependent cubs) and two or more additional sources of information which can be further evidentially linked to the payments. No evidence of any variance was found in the purchase price, and the authors further argue that the species value was determined by three key evidentially supported factors:

1. Purchases by the HCCRC were made in competition with James Harrison who had publicly offered £25 for a specimen in 1920[42], and whose notebook from around 1928 shows that he was paying £20 for a live specimen. Basic economics dictates that whilst in competition for a limited resource it would be unlikely for a purchaser to attempt to be less competitive than their rivals. This is especially true of the Hobart based HCCRC who were in competition with Harrison based in the north-west, the region from where all Thylacine kills or captures made after 1926 were contemporaneously recorded[43].

2. An awareness of the species value as a live specimen was well known to the rural population. This was demonstrated by Harold Loveluck who refused to accept an offer of £12/10/- from Taronga Park Zoo in July 1923[44] for his female specimen and by Wilfred Batty who recounted to Thompson (1974) the lengths he took to capture alive the individual that he subsequently killed and sold to *"Tiger Harrison"* (Brass, 1980). Further evidence of the awareness of the species value was demonstrated by Churchill to Sharland (1957) and in the State's press with *The World* of the 24th July 1920 (p.11) citing the value of a live Thylacine at £30 and the *Advocate* of the 22nd January 1930 (p.8) reporting:

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[39] The Mullins family group were identified amongst the items discussed on the 19/2/1924, the day the payment is recorded as having been made.

[40] Totalling 11 specimens which are supported by contemporary archival evidence or by multiple primary and secondary evidence.

[41] Elias Churchill [adult male], £25 (HCCRC: 5/6/1923); *The Mercury*, 20/6/1923, p.5; Crawford (1951); Sharland (1957); *The Mercury*, 19/6/1964, p.1; Stanfield 31/8/1981, Libraries Tasmania, NS896/6; Jenkins 2/9/1981, Libraries Tasmania, NS896/4; Gossage (1981) & Libraries Tasmania NS896/14. Harold Loveluck [adult female], £25 (HCCRC: 9/11/1923); Taronga Zoological Park Trust minutes, 10/7/1923; HCCRC: 3/6/1923; *The Mercury*, 7/7/1923, p.6 & Phyllis Blundell (Bailey, 2001). Walter Mullins [adult female and three dependant young], £55 (HCCRC: 19/2/1924); *The Mercury*, 29/11/1923, p.8; Herbert J. King photograph [TIR Ref: MFG 01] (QVM: 1983.P.1941); Lewis photograph, Rose Lewis private collection [TIR Ref: MFG 02]; *The Mercury*, 10/12/1923, p.6; *The Mercury*, 11/12/1923, p.10; *Examiner*, 18/1/1924, p.4; *Daily Telegraph* 19/1/1924, p.4; *World*, 9/2/1924, p.4 & HCCRC: 27/3/1928. James Harrison [adult female and two pouch cubs], £46/5/- (HCCRC: 19/8/1924); *The Mercury*, 5/8/1924, p.7 & *Examiner*, 5/8/1924, p.4. Murray Brothers [independent female], £25 (HCCRC: 18/8/1925); *The Mercury*, 13/7/1925, p. 20, 15/7/1925, p.1, 16/7/1925 p.1; *Examiner*, 16/7/1925, p.8, 17/7/1925 p.8 & HCCRC: 21/7/1925. Roy Delphin [juvenile male], £25 (HCCRC: 30/10/1930); *Advocate*, 11/7/1930, p.6; 11/8/1930, p.6; 20/9/1930, p.13; 22/9/1930, p.7; 23/9/1930, p.7; 24/9/1930, p.8; 25/9/1930, p.7; 26/9/1930, p.7 & 27/9/1930, p.13; *The Mercury*, 17/10/1030, p.8; Godfrey (1984) Breaden (Wisbey, 1994) & Rist, pers. com,. 28/9/2019.

[42] *Advocate*, 15/5/1920, p.6.

[43] Linnard (2023[b]) states that whilst both acquisitions made from the north by Beaumaris had first been reported in the press, none of Harrison's purchases were reported until after he had acquired them, indicating that he was successfully relying on local contacts which the Hobart based zoo lacked, placing them at a significant disadvantage.

[44] Taronga Zoological Park Trust minutes (10/7/1923).

> *"For the Melbourne Zoo specimen, £50 was asked by the vendor, but the price paid was only £25 - a bargain!"*

3. A price drop did not occur after the termination of the out of state market. Between 1923 and 1930 the HCCRC made six confirmed Thylacine purchases. In each case, independent juveniles and adults were purchased for £25 and dependant cubs for £10[45]. By 1936 the price offered by the HCCRC (16/9/1936) had increased to £30, and by the 9th March 1937[46] the price was publicly raised to £40. Privately, after receiving dispensation from the Fauna Board, a letter of the 3rd March 1937 confirms that the then director of the Tasmanian Museum, Joseph Pearson[47], had offered £50[48] for a live specimen. Between June 1923 and August 1925, the Beaumaris Zoo had obtained 10[49] of its 11[50] confirmed specimens. After which there was a five year hiatus until the arrival of the next Thylacine in October 1930. Throughout this period the list price (£20)[51] and the price paid (£25) remained static. The authors suggest that the stability of the price can be explained by the presence of Thylacines within the collection until the death of the last of the surviving 1920s specimens in late October 1929 (HCCRC: 1/11/1929). Further, during this period four Thylacine captures were reported in the press[52], and Lord's comments demonstrate an awareness of Harrison's ongoing trade in the species with the mainland. Consequently, no price rise had occurred by the time of the Delphin purchase in October 1930. However, despite the worsening economic climate, Lipscombe's offer of £30 on the 16th September 1936 confirms that the perceived value of a live Thylacine had increased by 20% in the ensuing six years, and in March 1937 by 60%, with Pearson's £50 offer representing a 100% increase on the prices paid during the 1920s. This period differs from the previous hiatus[53] in one key regard; the sole evidence based kill or live capture which can be identified is the capture made by James Kaine in early 1931 (Sleightholme *et al*., 2020), leaving at least five years during which there was only scant anecdotal evidence of the species persistence in the wild. Consequently, despite the lack of competition from Harrison, the evidence confirms that the value of the species was maintained by, or rose in proportion to, its rarity. Among a sample of additional Thylacine acquisitions proposed by Paddle (2012)[54], the authors found a 100% correlation between an alternate price point and definite error (*HBZ xx, xxi and xxii; HBZ xiii; HBZ xxvi - xxvii*), or instances where a payment was attributed to the species with no explanation or supporting evidence (*HBZ xxiv*):

HBZ xx, xxi and xxii

Paddle (2012) states: *"An adult female with two pouch young (xx to xxii) entered the zoo on 10th January 1928"*. This claim is presented without evidence; however, the authors note that the date given for the Thylacines arrival corresponds to that of a meeting of the HCCRC, the only archival source listing payments made on behalf of the zoo. With no alternative source, the date of arrival can only be based[55] on the minutes of this meeting. Of the 18 items recorded as being discussed, the sole reference to Beaumaris records the decision to allow members of the Bowling Association free admittance to the zoo. Of the 31 payments listed in the summary of accounts paid or to be paid, 18 were assigned to companies, with the remaining 13 to private individuals. With the exception of a £20 payment made to an E. R. Clarke, none of the payments listed to a named individual exceed £5/4/6, made to regular payee[56] *"Arnold, N."*, with the remainder being made for between £-/5/- and £3/2/3. The authors argue that Paddle's proposed purchase can only be based on the payment to E. R. Clarke, equating to a 55% reduction from the expected price of £45. However, this payment was agreed 15 days earlier, a decision which was recorded in the HCCRC minutes (26/12/1927) under the heading:

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[45] The Mullins group of a female with three dependant young and the Harrison female with two pouched young were purchased for £55 (HCCRC: 19/2/1924) and £46/5/- (HCCRC: 19/9/1924) respectively. With the exception of an extra £1/5/- in the case of the Harrison purchase, in each instance the price can be broken down to £25 for the adult and £10 for each of the dependant young.

[46] *The Mercury*, 9/3/1937, p.2.

[47] Pearson replaced Lord in February 1934.

[48] Pearson J. (1939), letter to Munro-Fox (University of Edgbaston, Birmingham) dated 27/7/1939, cited in Paddle & Medlock (2023)

[49] Churchill/O'May (1); Loveluck (1); Mullins (4); Harrison (3); Murray (1).

[50] Delphin male.

[51] Despite the price for a Thylacine being listed as £15 in a document attached to the HCCRC minutes of the 19/6/1923, it was never advertised at this figure. Fourteen days earlier on the 5/6/1923, the evidentially supported Churchill/O'May specimen had been purchased for £25. A further three adults were purchased for £25* and five dependent cubs for £10* between this date and April 1925 when the price was publicly advertised at £20 (*The Mercury*, 2/4/1925, p.9). This price was again advertised in *The Mercury* on the 13/6/28 (p.1) & 17/6/1928 (p.17) and reiterated to the HCCRC by Reid on the 14/4/1930, 199 days before the Delphin purchase on the 30/10/1930 for £25. In practise no purchase was made at the list price quoted by the HCCRC. [*equivalent pricing]

[52] *Circular Head Chronicle*, 26/9/1926, p.5; *The Mercury*, 27/10/1926, p.8; *Advocate*, 20/3/1928, p.4 & *Daily Telegraph*, 17/12/1929, p.6.

[53] The authors argue that no Thylacines were obtained after the Delphin specimen. Paddle & Medlock (2023) also acknowledge that there would have been a gap in Thylacine acquisitions between 1931 and May 1936, confirming that all parties agree on a hiatus of at least five years during the 1930s

[54] Paddle's specimens are prefixed HBZ followed by a roman numeric identifier.

[55] Whilst not directly supporting the date of arrival, Paddle suggests Alison Reid referred to this group stating: "…*were fairly advanced, they were just about on the point of emerging when they came in*" (Alison Reid, interview 27/2/1992). However, the authors argue that this reference should be applied to the Harrison group of an adult with two emerging cubs which arrived during August 1924 (HCCRC: 19/8/1924; *The Mercury*, 5/8/1924, p.7 & *Examiner*, 5/8/1924, p.4).

[56] N. Arnold was the owner of a Hobart Bakery and cannot be considered as a plausible potential Thylacine supplier.

> *"Offer of wire netting and 60 possums – Mr. E. R. Clark"*, specifying: *"On letter of Mr. E. R. Clark, of 7 Main Road, Moonah, offering a quantity of wire netting and roofing together with 60 possums for £20, the Curator recommended that the offer be accepted. Decided to accept the offer of Mr. Clark"*.

HBZ xxiii
An independent juvenile male purchased on the 24th January 1928 for £12 from a T. Hunt equates to a 52% reduction from the listed purchase price. Paddle (2012) bases this purchase on a misidentification of the subject of the May 1936 Sheppard photograph. Confounding this error, he states the payment was made to Tyenna farmer T. Hunt, but no trace could be found of this individual in the Electoral Roll for Tyenna. However, a T. Hunt appears in the HCCRC minutes (7th July 1925 & 22nd May 1928) and is identified as the lessor of the swimming facilities at Cornelian Bay, at which improvement work had been recommended 10 days earlier by the City's Medical Officer.

HBZ xxiv
An independent juvenile female on the 28th February 1928. This claim is presented entirely without evidence. This is also the date of a HCCRC meeting at which Reid received a payment of £13[57]. If this is the supporting source of Paddle's entry it would equate to a 48% reduction in the expected purchase price of £25.

HBZ xxvi and xxvii
Two Thylacines of unspecified age and gender on the 17th April 1928. Paddle's (2012) assumption that Reid acquired a Thylacine at this time is predicated on an entry in the HCCRC minutes of the 27th March 1928 recording a decision to send Reid to Port Davey in an attempt to obtain the species. However, as with HBZ xx, xxi & xxii and HBZ xxiii, the date of arrival coincides with that of a meeting of the HCCRC. Within the payment lists for this meeting a £20 payment is recorded to Reid, whilst the next highest sum paid to an individual is £5/10/-. The authors argue that with no plausible alternative, the £20 payment is the only source on which the arrival date could be based, equating to a reduction of 60% each from the expected price of £25 for an independent Thylacine. However, Reid was never sent to Port Davey, instead he was nominated to attend a conference on the export of native animals in Melbourne. During the meeting of the 17th April a response was recorded by the State Attorney General, stating: "*...there was no objection to Mr Reid being nominated as one of the Tasmanian representatives provided the council bore the expense*". Consequently, the £20 payment recorded in the *'Already Paid'* ledger at the same meeting can only be interpreted as Reid's travelling expenses as noted were required of the council, as on the 18th April he departed for Melbourne[58].

Based on the evidence, the authors argue that a purchase price for the last captive Thylacine can be accurately calculated. All but Guiler (1986) & Bailey (2001) agree that the last captive arrived as an independent juvenile or adult, and all but Paddle & Medlock (2023) agree that it arrived between 1925 (Guiler, 1986; Bailey, 2001) and 1931 (Sleightholme *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, the purchase price between 1925 and 1930 should be expected to be £25 for an independent specimen and £10 for a dependant cub. With reference to the 1931 Kaine specimen, the expected purchase price should be at least £25, and not £8 as cited by Sleightholme *et al.* (2020). In May 1936, the £5 allegedly paid for the unknown female proposed by Paddle & Medlock (2023) should have been between £25 and £30, with the evidence strongly suggesting the latter being the more likely. Only Guiler (1986) and Linnard *et al.* (2020) refer to a sum consistent with the proven purchase price of a Thylacine. Representing decreases of 68% and 80-83% from the evidence based price point, the sums suggested by Sleightholme *et al.* (2020) and Paddle & Medlock (2023) respectively, are considerably lower than the established price paid for compatible Thylacines. In this regard, they are consistent with the unevidenced or erroneous purchases cited in Paddle (2012).

The importance of Fleay's 1933 visit

The zoologist David Fleay visited Beaumaris in December 1933[59] and took six still images[60] and a short film sequence[61] of the last captive Thylacine. Recalling his visit in 1990 he stated:

> *"I owned a Graflex camera and I sought permission to get into the enclosure with the animal, I think they called him Ben*[62]*, and photograph him while I was there. And the*

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[57] Reid lacked the authority to make impromptu purchases. However, on the 14/2/1928 the HCCRC notes Reid had received a spider monkey from Taronga Park valued at £20 for which he offered 10 rufus wallaby purchased for £-/10/- each. The resale value of these specimens is listed as £-/10/10 (HCCRC: 19/6/1923), equating to £5/5/-, suggesting a deficit in the value of the spider monkey of £14/5/-. The authors suggest this is a more likely explanation for the £13 payment to Reid.

[58] *The Mercury*, 18/4/1928, p.8.

[59] *Advocate*, 13/12/1933, p.12 & 20/12/1933, p.12.

[60] Thylacine Image Registry (TIR): HBZ 11-16 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021a).

[61] Film 6 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021b).

[62] The names 'Ben' or 'Benjamin' are widely used to describe the last captive Thylacine. However, they were subsequently found to be a fabrication that originated with Frank Darby in his radio interview with the journalist and ornithologist Graham Pizzey in May 1968 (Paddle, 2000).

> *outstanding point was that he was interested in me, I was kneeling in the centre of the enclosure just waiting for my opportunities, one thing about a Graflex you can easily see exactly what you're taking, and he came round the back of me and I didn't move, and he tried me out for taste, nipped my behind. I regarded that as a supreme… ah what shall we say…joyous"* (Ryghe, 1990).

Four of his photographs were subsequently published in the January 1934 edition of *The Australasian*[63]. In the accompanying article, Fleay provided the sole contemporary authoritative reference to the year and circumstances of its capture:

> *"First and foremost is a fine male marsupial wolf, actually the sole member of its kind in captivity to-day* (sic). *It has thriven in Hobart for the last three years, and it was small when caught. The ring-like mark on the right hind leg is a legacy from the 'springer' snare which effected the capture. Two years ago an act of Parliament prohibited the further export of Thylacines (as the animals are correctly known), and very fittingly the Tasmanian Royal Society's emblem is an outline map of Tasmania containing a marsupial wolf. Bush people in Tasmania know this striped creature in the parts where it still lingers as 'the tiger'. Early observers of 100 years ago marvelled at 'its huge jaws opening almost to the ears'. Its natural diet consists of small mammals, wallabies, &c.,* (sic) *and of these, which are followed until they tire, only certain parts are eaten, the rest being left to the scavenging 'devils'. The big fellow in the zoo was not a safe companion inside his enclosure, and while photographs were being taken Mr. Reid had to ward him off continually with a paling".*

Whilst Fleay could not have independently determined the period of the Thylacine's captivity, nor its age on capture, his account confirms that he spent his visit in the company of the zoo's curator Arthur Reid. Reid would have been aware of both of these facts and it was almost certainly he who provided this information to Fleay. Despite being a contemporary first-hand statement from an authoritative source, Fleay's 1934 account slipped into obscurity and was absent from the literature until cited by Sleightholme (2011). That the erroneous date given by Sharland (1962) endured whilst Fleay's was ostensibly forgotten is undoubtedly due to the durability of the sources in which they were published. Fleay's implied date of capture (1930) appeared in a newspaper article, making it more challenging to access by later researchers, whilst Sharland's was formally published in books which went on to be widely circulated and cited. In 1964, the entirety of Sharland's (1962) Thylacine chapter was reproduced in Chisholm's widely read - *Land of Wonder: The Best Australian Nature Writing*. Ensuring an international distribution for Sharland's error, describing him as "*… the leading zoologist of Tasmania*", Grzimek (1972) draws heavily from Sharland (1962) repeating his capture date and citing him both directly and indirectly. Sharland's influence is also traceable in the two most prominent contemporary specialist sources to cite the year of capture as 1933. Both Smith (1981) and Paddle (2000) cite Grzimek (1976), with Paddle also citing Sharland (1962).

The four contenders and five capture and display scenarios

Guiler (1986) states: *"At least four persons have claimed to have caught the last tiger to go to the Hobart Zoo"*. Whilst he does not provide any details of the claimants, multiple individuals have claimed, or have been attributed to have supplied the last Thylacine to Beaumaris. The authors have identified the four principal candidates in the literature:

- Guiler (1986); Bailey (2001) – Surviving cub from Mullins 1924 family group,
- Smith (1981); Paddle (2000) – 1933 Churchill second capture,
- Sleightholme, Gordon & Campbell (2020) – 1931 Kaine capture,
- Linnard, Williams & Holmes (2020) – 1930 Delphin capture,
- Paddle & Medlock (2023) – 1936 Churchill second capture.

Identifying characteristics

Linnard *et al.* (2020) argued that Fleay's 1934 account provides four identifying criteria that must be met by the prospective contenders to qualify as Beaumaris' last Thylacine:

- That, allowing for error, it arrived at Beaumaris between mid-1930 and mid-1931,
- That it was captured as a juvenile,
- That it was a male,
- That it bore a snare mark to its right hind leg.

Fleay's inferred 1930 arrival date for the last captive Thylacine: "*It has thriven in Hobart for the last three years*" was finally confirmed in January 2022 with the re-discovery of the 1931 Stewart film[64]. Between the 26th March and the 14th May 1931[65], Dr. Randall Stewart and his wife visited Beaumaris and took two short film sequences of the lone Thylacine on display[66]. The first sequence (10 seconds duration) features only the Thylacine. The second sequence (9 seconds duration) focuses on the Tasmanian devil in the adjoining enclosure with the Thylacine observable in the background through the dividing wire mesh.

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[63] *The Australasian*, 20/1/1934, p.25 & p.43.

[64] The Stewart footage (Film 13) was thought lost (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021^{b}), but was rediscovered in January 2022.

[65] *The Herald*, 26/3/1931, p.2 & *Table Talk*, 14/5/1931, p.36.

When visible, the Thylacines stripe pattern can be used to positively identify specimens in the photographic record. Sleightholme & Campbell (2015) note:

> *"As with human fingerprints, the stripe pattern of the Thylacine is unique to each individual, with a marked degree of variation and asymmetry".*

Figure 1 shows the complex interconnecting zig-zag stripe pattern along the back of the last captive in images captured by Stewart (March/May 1931), Fleay (December 1933) and Sheppard (May 1936). As can be clearly seen in the photographic comparison, the stripe pattern is identical in all three images confirming the animal to be one and the same. Consequently, the last captive Thylacines presence at Beaumaris can be confirmed beyond any doubt between May 1931 and May 1936, with a minimum period of captivity of four years and 11 months[67].

Fleay's second point, that: "*...it was small when caught*" is also validated by the Stewart film. Whilst the general demeanour is obviously that of a young animal, with minimal clues to the subject's size, its age is not objectively determinable. However, *The Mercury* (13/7/1978) reporting on the film stated twice within its article that the subject was a cub:

> *"The film runs for about 15 minutes and includes rare footage of a Tasmanian tiger cub"*, and that prior to the film's arrival: *"The corporation has film taken in about 1936 of a captive adult Tasmanian tiger, but has no record of a cub"*.

The term '*cub*' is something of a misnomer in that the Thylacine, although young, was maternally independent and probably around 18 months of age at the time of its capture (see: Captivity Chronology). *The Mercury* also reported that the Stewart film had been retrieved by the State's Agent-General in London, where the Stewarts then resided, and a copy sent to the Tasmanian Broadcasting Corporation. As the film was obtained directly from the Stewarts, the description of the animal's immaturity can likely be attributed to them. Further, as this individual can be confirmed to have lived in captivity for a further five and a half years until its death in September 1936, it can be reasonably assumed to have been a young animal in early 1931.

Fleay's observation of the animal's sex, "*...a fine male marsupial wolf*" has also been confirmed. Paddle (2000) notes with reference to the Fleay film and to the photographs he then credited as being those of the last captive specimen:

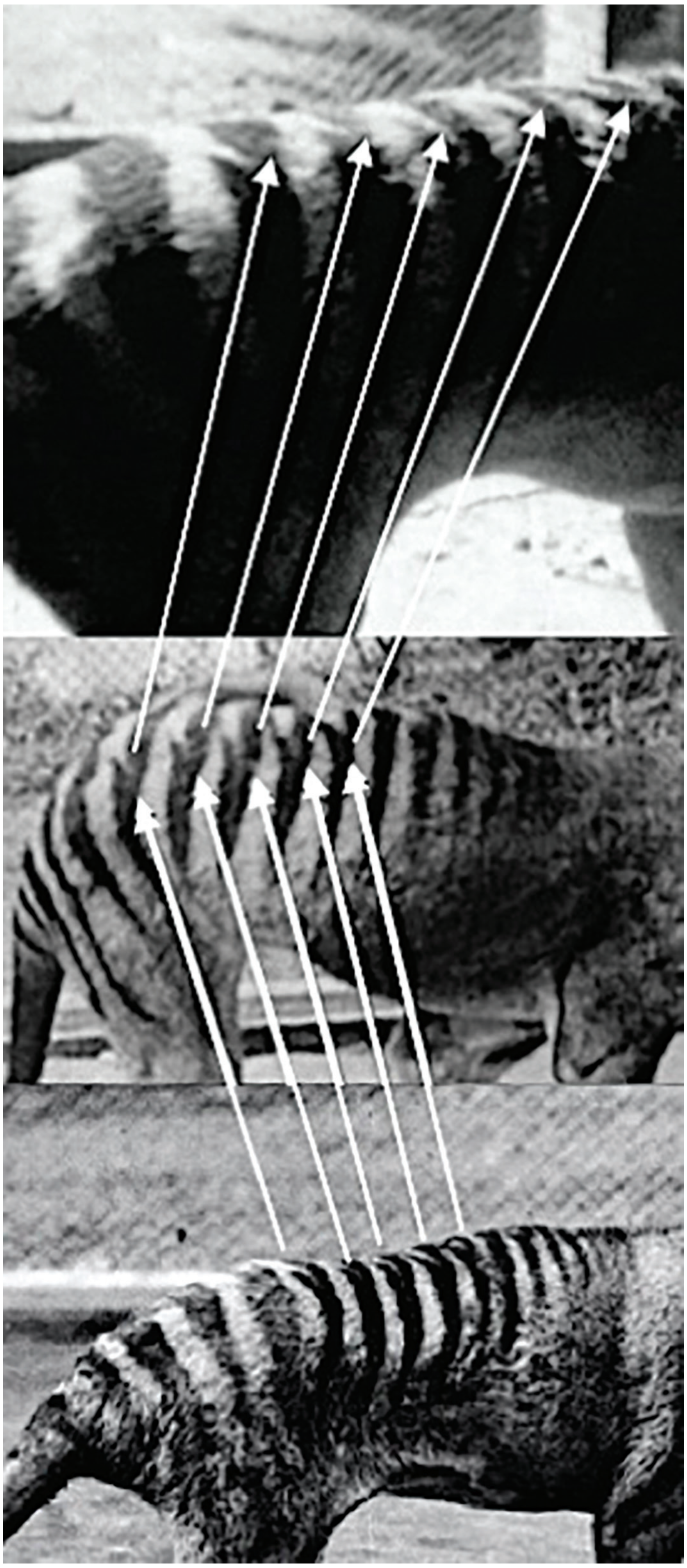

Figure 1. Stripe pattern comparison of the subject in the Stewart (1931) & Fleay (1933) films and the Sheppard (1936) photograph. Photo and film stills courtesy: Pond 5, David Fleay Trustees & Libraries Tasmania.

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[66] *The Mercury*, 13/7/1978.

[67] Time scale calculated from the 14/5/1931 (latest possible time of the Stewart film) to 1/5/1936 (earliest possible date of the Sheppard photograph).

> *"At this stage it is worth introducing the idea that if the last thylacine specimen was genuinely called 'Benjamin', then a dreadful accident must have happened to him in his youth. Male mammals frequently display important sexual characteristics in the vicinity of their hind legs. Although male thylacine possessed a pouch in which the testes were often carried, they were never permanently hidden from view. There is no evidence of the presence of testes in any of the surviving film or still photographs of the last thylacine specimen, these records suggest, in parallel with the size and shape of the head and body, that the last thylacine specimen was a mature, but still relatively young, adult female".*

However, in 2011 Sleightholme published an enhanced still from Fleay's 1933 film in which he identified the scrotum confirming the subject's sex beyond any doubt [Fig. 2]. Further, the penile mound (red arrow) is clearly visible in the Stewart [Fig. 3a] and earlier Doyle [Fig. 7] films.

Fleay's final observation, that the Thylacine bore a "*... ring-like mark on the right hind leg*", is clearly identifiable in both the Fleay and Stewart films [Fig. 3 - white arrows]. Consequently, the evidence confirms that Fleay's observations were correct, and that the last captive Thylacine was present in Hobart by mid-April 1931, was captured as a juvenile, was male, and was identifiable by a snare mark to its right hind-leg.

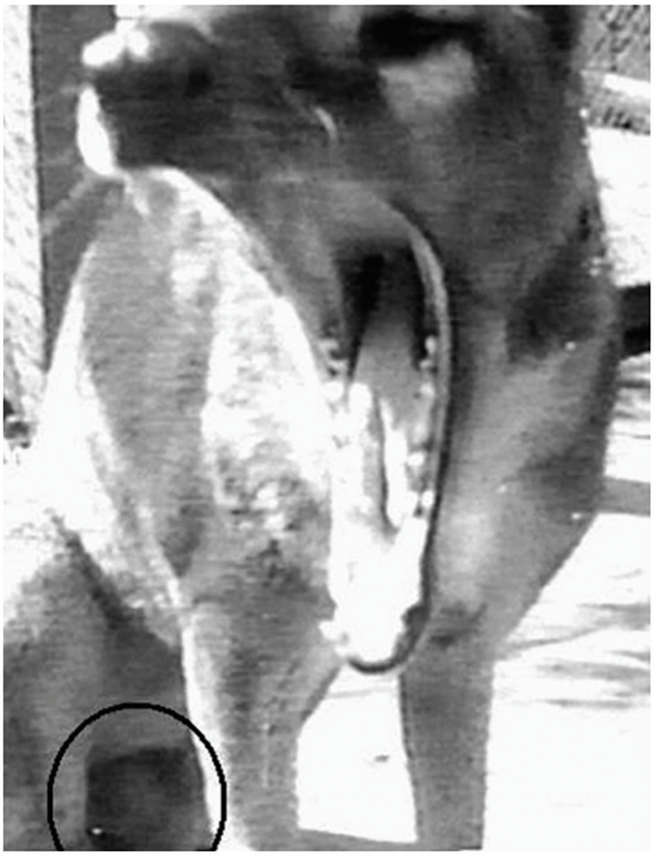

Figure 2. Enhanced still from the 1933 Fleay film showing scrotum (circled). Source: Sleightholme (2011). Film still courtesy: David Fleay Trustees.

Guiler (1986) & Bailey (2001)

Guiler (1986) and subsequently Bailey (2001) proposed the last captive Thylacine to be a surviving cub from the Mullins family group, unquestionably the best documented of the Beaumaris Thylacines of the 1920s. The female and her three cubs were captured by Walter Mullins near Tyenna around June 1923[68]. They were eventually sold to Beaumaris for £55[69], arriving between the 7th and 9th February 1924[70].

Whilst Guiler and Bailey's approach to the evidence is suitably conservative, their proposition that one of the Mullins cubs was the last captive suggests an implausible life span for the species of >13 years. Further evidence to eliminate the Mullins cub comes from Clive Lord who was quoted in *The Mercury* of the 12th February 1930 (p.8) stating that: "*There was no specimen in the Beaumaris*

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[68] *The Mercury*, 11/12/1923, p.10.

[69] HCCRC: 19/2/1924.

[70] *World*, 9/2/1924, p.4.

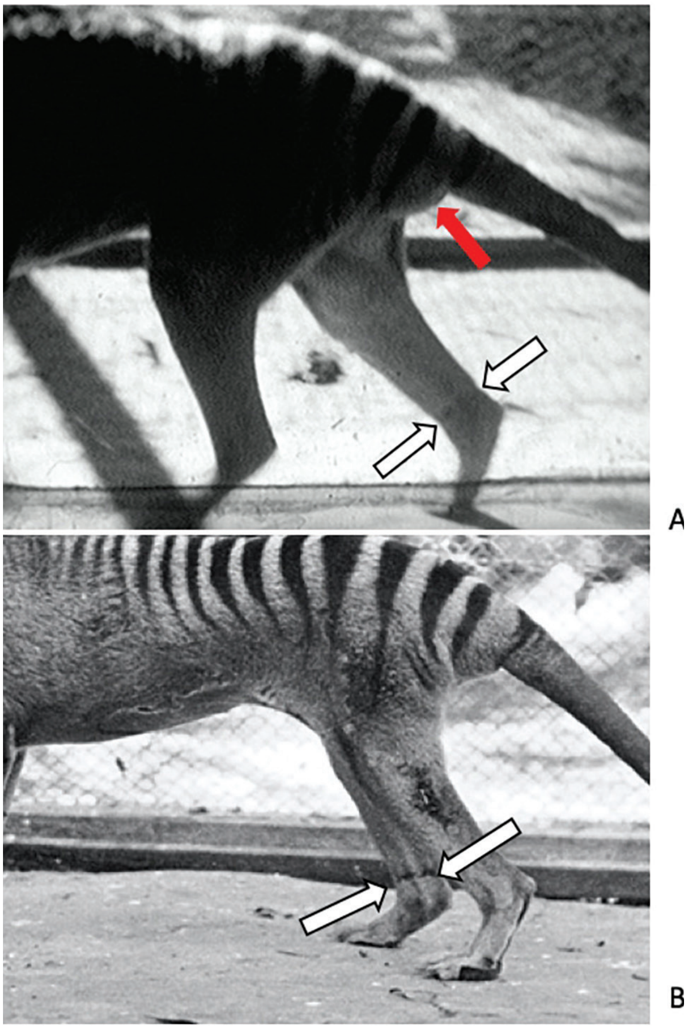

Figure 3. Snare mark evident to the right rear leg in the Stewart (1931) film and Fleay (1933) photograph [white arrows]. Penile mound evident in still from Stewart film [red arrow]. Images courtesy: Pond 5(A) & David Fleay Trustees(B).

Zoo", thus discounting the possibility of the continuous presence of a specimen from 1924 to 1936. In addition, Guiler and Bailey's candidate was captured as a pup, so the presence of a snare mark as Campbell (2017) correctly observes, would preclude it from being the last captive:

> *"If one of the Mullins cubs had survived to become the zoo's last specimen, then it could not possibly have borne the mark of a snare to its rear leg, for it was its mother that was snared".*

Dismissing the 1925 Murray purchase as a potential candidate, and without ready access to contemporary newspaper articles afforded to modern day researchers by websites such as Trove, Guiler appears to have been unaware of the *Advocate* articles describing the Delphin captures and the subsequent article in *The Mercury* reporting the sale of one of their Thylacines to the zoo[71]. Consequently, despite Guiler having access to the HCCRC minutes, the payment to R. Delphin for £25 recorded as '*Proposed to be Paid*' on the 30th October 1930 was completely, if understandably, overlooked.

Smith (1981) & Paddle (2000)

Both Smith (1981) and Paddle (2000) credit Elias Churchill (1892-1974) with the capture of the last of Beaumaris' Thylacines in 1933. Smith states:

> *"...and in the Florentine Valley in 1933, Elias Churchill snared a thylacine, that he sold to the "Beaumaris" Hobart Domain Zoo. This individual may have been the last captive, that died at the zoo on the 7th September, 1936".*

In his chronology of events, Smith lists only two subsequent entries after the purported 1933 Churchill capture; the introduction of full legal protection and the death of the last captive, both of which occurred in 1936. As the first to associate Churchill with Sharland's (1962) capture location and 1933 date, Smith is understandably cautious in explicitly declaring this to be the last captive. Consequently, it is reasonable to view his statements as the genesis of the notion that Churchill made the final capture in the Florentine Valley in 1933 and that later authors subsequently drew on this reference. Smith's attribution to Churchill cannot be explained, and he offers no direct evidence in its support[72]. However, Churchill's sole live capture, which is evidentiary supported to have occurred in 1923 and was amongst the last to be made in the south-west[73], appears to have been remembered prominently[74] and its significance may have subsequently become exaggerated. An alleged 1933 capture contradicts the established evidence in two key respects:

- The Stewart Film confirms that the last captive was present at Beaumaris in 1931, two years before Smith and Paddle's proposed arrival date.
- Churchill estimated the weight of his Thylacine, which he carried around his neck, to be "*...the best part of 40lbs*" (Sharland, 1957). Therefore, at approximately 18kg, Churchill's Thylacine is close to the mean body weight of an adult male (19.7kg) as noted by Rovinsky *et al*., (2020), and above the plausible weight range for a juvenile.

Further discrepancies with Smith and Paddle's position can be found in Churchill's own testimony. Churchill described his experiences with the Thylacine in two interviews. Sharland (1957) states:

> *"Of the eight tigers Churchill has trapped - he has seen many more - only two were taken alive".*

Notably, whilst Churchill provided the same total number of captures in his 1964 interview with *The Mercury*[75], he only ever described one live capture. Reconciling the discrepancy between the accounts, one of the two live captures cited by Sharland can be evidentiary dismissed. Sharland erroneously attributed Churchill with the capture of a family group which can be confidently attributed to his friend and fellow trapper Walter Mullins:

> *"One of those taken alive was a doe with three young in her pouch. Before ending up at the zoo this animal with two pups - the third died - brought in a bit of extra cash by being exhibited around country fairs and carnivals in Tasmania between 1925 and 1926".*

It is known that Churchill assisted Mullins with his capture. Bannear *et al.* (1991) recorded the testimony of Charlie Batchelor who recalled Churchill's involvement:

> *"And another chap by the name of Walter Mullins - you might've read about this years ago, about them ... he caught the old bitch and the five pups[76] that was in the zoo at Hobart. You might've read about them being in the zoo. Well there, Walter Mullins, he was the man that caught that - and Churchill".*

It is also apparent that Churchill must have referred to

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[71] *Advocate*, 11/7/1930, p.6 & 11/8/30, p.6 & *The Mercury*, 18/10/1930, p.8.

[72] Smith (pers. com., 21/10/2022) stated that since retirement he no longer had access to the relevant records which led him to make the association.

[73] Along with those subsequently made by Harold Loveluck and Walter Mullins, Churchill's was among the final three captures in the south-west.

[74] Churchill's capture is recalled by Chaplin (1954) [see: Dating conundrums], Jenkins (1981), Gossage (1981), Stanfield (1981), and by Churchill himself in Sharland (1957) and *The Mercury* (1964). Both Chaplin & Stanfield erroneously place it during the mid-1930s, or as the last.

[75] *The Mercury*, 19/9/1964, p.1

[76] The maximum litter size for a Thylacine was four pups, so this is an error on Batchelor's part.

Mullins whilst speaking to Sharland as he is referenced elsewhere in the article. That Churchill failed to describe the group capture to Sharland, or refer to it in *The Mercury* article, suggests that he did not claim the capture himself. Consequently, it appears that Sharland either misunderstood what Churchill was telling him or decided to include it in his total to improve the narrative, which was subsequently published in the popular magazine *People*. Churchill himself only described making a single capture which the evidence dates to 1923. This date is supported by Sharland (1957), who after interviewing Churchill wrote that he was the captor, not of Beaumaris' last Thylacine, but of its "*first*", the arrival of which Sharland reported in *The Mercury* of the 20th June 1923 (p.5). Churchill consistently described the aftermath of his capture:

> "*While Churchill had it contained it refused to eat, believing it might fret and die, Churchill had to work out some way to make it take food. It ignored living or dead wallaby, but ultimately it was persuaded to eat by having the smell of blood from a freshly killed wallaby put beneath its nose*". Churchill is then quoted as saying: "*…and when it did begin, it didn't stop till everything, including bones, was gone. I knew it was all right then*" (Sharland, 1957).

> "*Me and Albert Harris - he's been dead 10 years now - caught one in the Florentine Valley. We built a big pen for it but it refused to eat a thing. Then I shot a wallaby and skinned it quick, and threw it to the tiger while the meat was still warm. Before Albert and me had sat down to the billy we heard the bones crunching. After that he ate all right*" (*The Mercury*, 19/9/1964, p.1).

In an interview with Lindsay Crawford[77] (1951) Ernest Bond stated:

> "*Elias Churchill (now at the zinc works) caught a tiger in a snare at Adamsfield in 1926. He had no cage to put it in, so lowered it into a deep prospecting hole which he covered over. The tiger refused to even look at pieces of meat dropped down, so at last, in desperation, Elias caught a live wallaby and dropped it down. The tiger promptly pounced on it and cleaned it up. Bill O'May packed the specimen into the Beaumaris Zoo, from whence it was sent to Taronga Park Zoo*".

Bond acknowledged that the account he related was third-hand and stated that he was "*…not willing to confirm the details*". Despite his reservations, it is clearly based on Churchill's experience, albeit with the location transferred approximately 4km west of Churchill's hut on what would become the Fitzgerald to Adamsfield track. The authors argue that Bond's mention of Bill O'May[78] provides a crucial insight into accurately dating the capture. Disregarding Bond's reference to 1926[79], the HCCRC minutes of the 5th June 1923 record that a £25 payment had been made to a W. P. O'May since the previous meeting held on the 22nd May 1923. Between 15 to 29 days following the payment to O'May, Sharland wrote[80]:

> "*Within the last few weeks there has been added to the Beaumaris Zoo a specimen of that rare animal, the Tasmanian tiger, which was captured in a snare in the country near Tyenna. Its paws have been somewhat injured, and for that reason it has not been on public view, but its condition is rapidly improving*".

Consequently, the authors contend that all the evidence supporting Churchill's sole acknowledged live capture can be dated to 1923. However, Paddle (2000) disagrees arguing that Churchill was also the captor of the zoo's last Thylacine. Whilst Paddle does not directly reference either Sharland (1962) or Smith (1981) in his discussion of the last captive's arrival, the authors argue that his position is undoubtedly based on their conclusions[81]. To augment Smith's position, Paddle cites a letter by Sharland (1972) [Fig. 4] in which he states that he had:

> "*…no exact knowledge of where the last Thylacine to be kept at the old Hobart Zoo was trapped. The only record I have is that given to me by the then Zoo manager, A. R. Reid, that this particular animal came from the Florentine Valley*".

Despite Sharland stating that he believed Beaumaris' last Thylacine came from the Florentine Valley, no record of any such purchase exists in either the minutes of the HCCRC or those of the Council's Health Committee, which administered spending on the zoo's behalf from February 1933 to May 1934. Paddle then quotes a further extract in which Sharland states: "*…you may be interested in an interview with Elias Churchill*". Appearing to confound Sharland's statement that the capture occurred in 1933, with Smith's attribution of it to Churchill in the same year, Paddle adds: "*…whom Sharland accepted as being the captor of the last specimen*". However, no recovered source suggests Sharland associated the last captive with Churchill; in fact, he clearly states the precise opposite. After addressing a question relating to the capture location of the zoo's last Thylacine posed in Dr. Brown's correspondence of the 10th December 1971, the letter simply directs him to the general information in

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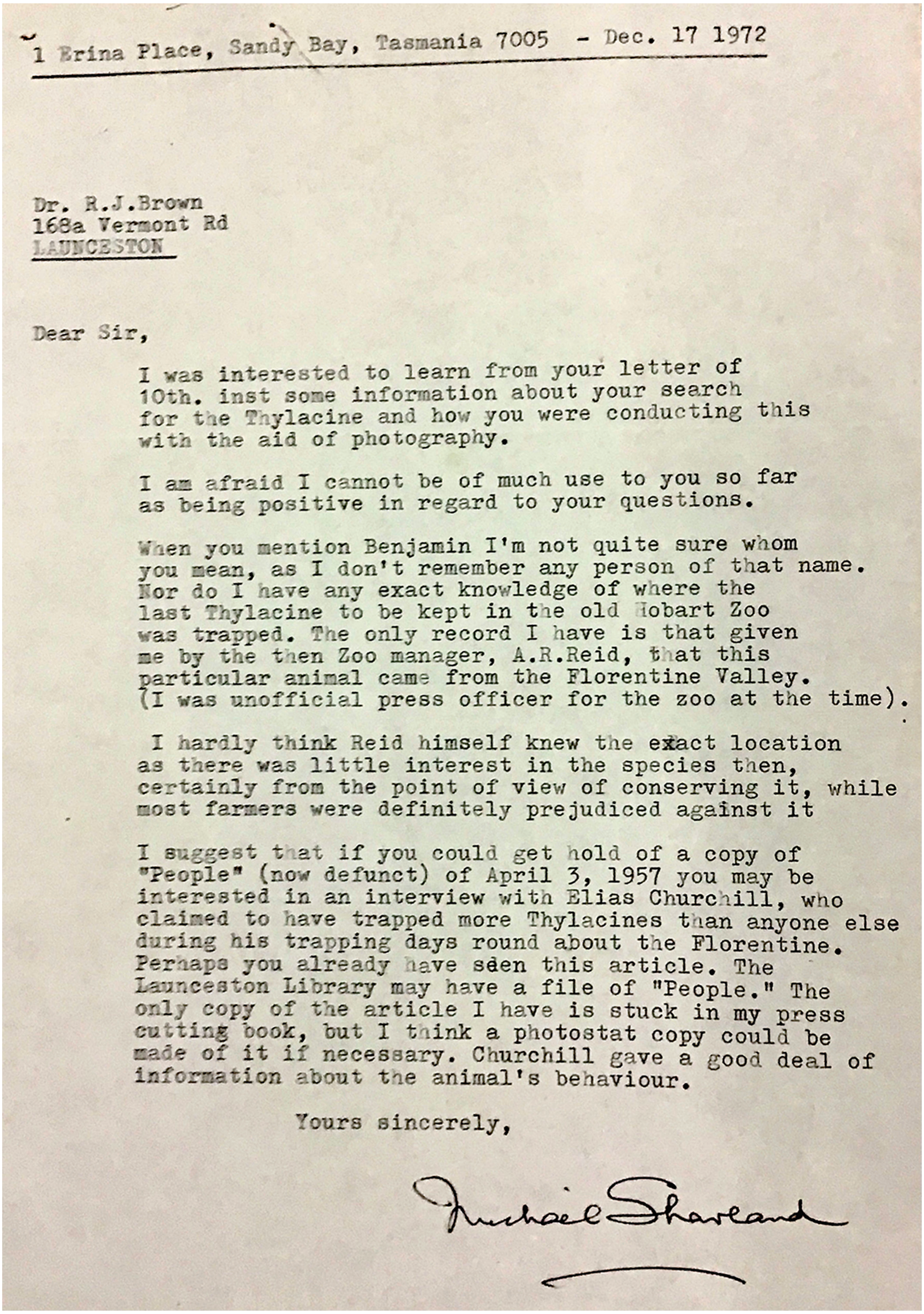
[77] Lindsay Dinham Crawford (1926-2017), Entomologist and Biologist.

[78] 'W. P.' and 'Bill' O'May are almost certainly Fitzgerald farmer William Percival O'May who had previously supplied a Thylacine to Mary Roberts in 1916. This sale provides a possible explanation for Bond's mistaken reference to the Sydney Zoo, as it was O'May's 1916 capture that was subsequently sold to Taronga in 1918.

[79] The HCCRC minutes confirm that no Thylacine purchases were made in 1926.

[80] *The Mercury*, 20/6/1923, p.5.

[81] Paddle (2000) references Smith (1981) elsewhere.



1 Erina Place, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7005 - Dec. 17 1972

Dr. R.J.Brown
168a Vermont Rd
LAUNCESTON

Dear Sir,

I was interested to learn from your letter of 10th. inst some information about your search for the Thylacine and how you were conducting this with the aid of photography.

I am afraid I cannot be of much use to you so far as being positive in regard to your questions.

When you mention Benjamin I'm not quite sure whom you mean, as I don't remember any person of that name. Nor do I have any exact knowledge of where the last Thylacine to be kept in the old Hobart Zoo was trapped. The only record I have is that given me by the then Zoo manager, A.R.Reid, that this particular animal came from the Florentine Valley. (I was unofficial press officer for the zoo at the time).

I hardly think Reid himself knew the exact location as there was little interest in the species then, certainly from the point of view of conserving it, while most farmers were definitely prejudiced against it

I suggest that if you could get hold of a copy of "People" (now defunct) of April 3, 1957 you may be interested in an interview with Elias Churchill, who claimed to have trapped more Thylacines than anyone else during his trapping days round about the Florentine. Perhaps you already have seen this article. The Launceston Library may have a file of "People." The only copy of the article I have is stuck in my press cutting book, but I think a photostat copy could be made of it if necessary. Churchill gave a good deal of information about the animal's behaviour.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Sharland

Figure 4. Sharland letter to Dr. R. J. Brown dated 17/12/1972. Ref: QVM:1998.MS.0061.1. Photo courtesy: Queen Victoria Museum (Launceston).

his 1957 *People* interview in which he credited Churchill with the capture of the "*first*" of the Domain's Thylacines.

As it is presented, Paddle creates the paradoxical situation in which Sharland (1957) and Sharland (1972) appear to support two mutually exclusive dates for Churchill's single live capture. Sharland's retrospective testimony is discredited by the fluidity of the dates he provided between 1937 and 1962. Any information Sharland received from Reid regarding the purchase of a Thylacine from the Florentine Valley must have been provided before Reid's death in December 1935[82]. Consequently, all of Sharland's errors must have been made whilst such information was in his possession. Though Sharland's letter does not directly provide a date for his conversation with Reid, he states that:

> "*I was the unofficial press officer for the zoo at the time*".

Consequently, the period during which he carried out this role must necessarily have been before he left Tasmania for Sydney in 1927, thereby dating the receipt of the information from Reid to no later than the mid-1920s.

In total, six Thylacines were purchased for Beaumaris from the South West of the State between 1923 and February 1924[83], four of which are accounted for by the mother and three cubs of the Mullins family group. With the exception of the Murray purchase during the 1920s, *The Mercury* reported on each of the zoos Thylacine acquisitions. Sharland as a naturalist and journalist working for the newspaper was assigned to cover stories relating to the zoo and would have spoken to Reid about their respective arrival dates, captors and capture locations. The unabridged content of Sharland's letter demonstrates that his statement related to these purchases, the context of which he appears to have incorrectly recalled some 48-49 years later.

Paddle (2000) provides three witness testimonies[84] to support Churchill making a second live capture in the 1930s. Of these, Chaplin (1954) makes no direct claim that the Thylacine he recalled was the last captive; however, this could be inferred from the implied date in his account: "…*twenty years ago one was captured up in the fields by Churchill*". Interpreting Chaplin's statement as a reference to the last captive is entirely dependent on a literal acceptance of the time frame "*twenty years*". Whilst there is nothing in Chaplin's statement to raise doubt, in light of the wider evidence it appears to have been used as a general term. However, should Chaplin be interpreted literally, his implied date of 1934 cannot possibly refer to the last captive, which is now known to have arrived at the zoo by 1931. A further witness cited by Paddle, Stanfield (1981)[85] stated:

> *"The last tiger to be caught in Tasmania was way up behind Fitzgerald Tyenna way by a Mr. E. Churchill and Percie Statton V.C. after the first world war".*

The post-1918 date provided by Stanfield is manifestly too amorphous to be of any evidentiary value. Further, the identity proposed for Churchill's hunting companion (Percie Statton) contradicts that provided by Churchill himself, who in his own testimony he identified as Albert Harris[86]. Subsequent investigation found that no connection could be established between Stanfield and the Hobart City Council, Beaumaris Zoo, or the State Fauna Board. However, a link with Churchill is identifiable. Both men were keen sportsmen and represented local teams in football and cricket, Churchill representing Tyenna and Stanfield Ellendale. In June 1921 and August 1922 they are recorded as facing each other on the football field. Further, the two teams met again on the 18th July 1923 at Ellendale, one month after Sharland's report of the arrival of Beaumaris' first Thylacine. Stanfield's last recorded appearance for Ellendale was reported in *The Mercury* on the 16th January 1924 (p.12), following which the family relocated their business to Hobart[87]. Stanfield's presence in Hobart can be traced through reports of his sporting prowess in *The Mercury* between the 19th December 1924 (p.14) until 7th October 1927 (p.14), when it was reported that he had "*left the State*". Stanfield is recorded as having married at Rockdale (NSW) in 1933. His return to Hobart can first be identified in *The Mercury* of the 12th September 1935 (p.9). Whilst Stanfield and Churchill continued to play cricket for their local teams[88], each within their own respective Associations, there is no record of the men meeting again after July 1923. As Stanfield was resident on the mainland between 1927 and 1935, the authors argue that he cannot be accepted as a primary witness to a purported Thylacine capture by Churchill in 1933. The authors maintain that he was most likely recalling events he had become aware of prior to his departure from the state during the 1920s. In summary, evidence from the HCCRC (1923), Sharland (1923, 1957, 1972), Bond (Crawford, 1951), and Stanfield (1981) unequivocally support a date of 1923 for Churchill's single live capture, the first of the Domain Thylacines. It is worth reiterating that Churchill never claimed to have made the last capture, neither did he offer any date for the single capture he did claim. Consequently, only a literal interpretation of Chaplin (1954) remains to lend support to Smith and Paddle's original contention that Churchill made a capture in 1933.

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[82] *The Mercury*, 16/12/1935, p.5.

[83] HCCRC: 5/6/1923; HCCRC: 11/9/1923 & HCCRC: 19/2/1924.

[84] The third witness being Edith Gossage (1981)

[85] From additional information provided in Stanfield's letter (his father's initials were "*W. J.*"; he had worked as a shepherd on the Dunrobin estate and his sister was a Mrs Tomlin aged 95 in 1981) it is possible to identify the author as Vincent Roy Stanfield (1900-1988).

[86] Edith Gossage (1981) failed to correctly identify Churchill's companion (Albert Harris) instead stating that it was a C. Farrow.

[87] *The Mercury*, 27/3/1936, p.2.

[88] There is no reference to Churchill continuing to play football after 1924.

Sleightholme *et al.* (2020)

Dismissing Churchill's unsupported 1933 capture, Sleightholme *et al.* (2020) argued that the 1931 capture made by James Millar Kaine, recalled by his surviving daughter Nell Gale (née Kaine) who witnessed the event as a child[89], was a potential contender for the zoo's last Thylacine. Linnard *et al.* (2020) subsequently questioned the 1931 date based on Nell's age at that time:

> *"The witness who related the account of the capture, Nell Kaine, described meeting the thylacine on her way to school. However, born in 1925, under the legislation of the time Nell would not have started school until after her seventh birthday in 1932".*

According to the 1905 amendment to the *Education Act (1885)* this critique is technically correct, but in Nell's case it is now known to have been an invalid objection. In rural schools, the admission rules were more relaxed and it was not unusual for children to start school early (Haygarth, pers. com., 24/12/2020).

The Preolenna State School register confirms that this was true for Nell, who commenced her education on the 2nd February 1931, aged 5 years and 10 months[90]. With reference to the year of capture, Sleightholme *et al.* (2020) state:

> *"Nell was also unable to recall the precise time of year when her father's capture was made (Gordon interview, 2019), but it would have to have been after February when the new school year had commenced, and before her sixth birthday in April. This would place the capture to late summer - early autumn of 1931".*

Dating the Kaine capture to early 1931 would certainly reconcile with Fleay's 1934 comment that:

> *"It has thriven in Hobart for the last three years".*

It would also correlate with the March / May 1931 date of the Stewart film. However, as will become evident, this date is now known to preclude it as a potential candidate for the last captive.

There is little doubt that Nell Gale's recollection of events is a true account and that her father's capture is a bona fide contender for the last wild caught specimen. In her interview, Nell recalled that her father's Thylacine was subsequently sold to the wild animal dealer James Harrison at Wynyard:

> *"When we got home from school I can remember Dad having a big box built ready to take to Wynyard, and he had it tied, strapped up with wire as well…It was long and high…he [father] put it in the trap, horse trap, to take it to Wynyard".*

Bruce Walker (1981), who as a school boy accompanied his father (Dr. Gordon Walker) to Harrison's to attend to the animals trap injuries[91] stated: "*I believe the tiger was sent to Hobart Zoo*". Based on this comment, Sleightholme *et al.* (2020) argued that the Kaine Thylacine was subsequently sold to Beaumaris in August 1931 for the sum of £8 and that the reduced purchase price reflected its juvenile status. However, this assumption is now known to be flawed. As previously stated, £25 was the price consistently paid by the HCCRC for all maternally independent Thylacines. The HCCRC minutes record that the only payment made to Harrison in 1931 was for £8 for an unknown consignment of animals '*Proposed to be Paid*' on the 3rd August. A price point of £8 for an independent specimen is unprecedented and, contrary to the evidence supporting a stable price point in 1931, would represent a 68% reduction from the Delphin purchase the previous year. To assume on the basis of its juvenile status that Harrison would be willing to part with the Kaine Thylacine for less than the amount he would have received for a maternally dependent cub is also contrary to the evidence. Whilst the suggestions that he would have accepted less for a live specimen than the Tasmanian Museum would have paid him for a dead specimen, or for what he himself would have paid Kaine for the specimen, is implausible and would make no commercial sense. Further, the Stewart film made between late March and mid-May 1931 confirms that the last captive was already present at this time. Consequently, a payment made in August 1931 would represent an unprecedented delay of four months[92]. Therefore, with no evidence of a credible payment to be found within the HCCRC minutes, the purchase of the Kaine Thylacine can now be dismissed.

Whilst the suggested sale of the Kaine Thylacine to Beaumaris can be excluded by the value and timing of the payment to Harrison, Walker's statement requires examination. There is no evidence of Harrison supplying a Tasmanian institution with either live Thylacines or specimens after 1924[93]. In fact, evidence from his notebook from around 1928 and from the minutes of the Royal Zoological Society of Victoria (RMZAS, 1935, p.42) confirms that he was supplying Melbourne Zoo, Colin MacKenzie of the Australian Institute of Anatomy, and Perry Brother's Circus, the latter two at greatly inflated prices[94]. Despite this, the authors note that several of Harrison's suppliers were led to believe that their Thylacines would ultimately be sold to Tasmanian institutions. Adye Jordan (1987) stated that in 1928 / 1929 he was informed his specimen was to be sold to Beaumaris[95], whilst McIntyre (1955) stated that Wilfred Batty had informed him that Harrison had stated that he intended to forward the body of the Thylacine he shot on the 13th May 1930[96] to the Queen Victoria Museum (QVMAG):

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[89] Gordon interview with Nell Gale (QVMAG), 14/1/2019.

[90] Libraries Tasmania: Ref: AA444/1/1.

[91] Whilst the *Advocate* (20/3/1928, p.4) reported that a Thylacine captured in March 1928 had been treated with splints for a broken leg, the authors contend that Walker's reference is to the Kaine animal as Nell Gale recalled the presence of Dr. Walker and his son attending to the animal.

[92] Whilst the two month delay in payment for the Loveluck specimen would suggest this tactic may have been employed in the case of an injured specimen, the apparently healthy animal seen in the Stewart film would preclude this as an explanation.

[93] *The Mercury* of the 5/8/1924 (p.7) & HCCRC: 19/8/1924.

> *"Mr Harrison had told him (Batty) he was going to send the Tiger to Launceston Museum, but he could not say if he did or not".*

However as Gordon (2023) notes, the museum did not receive any complete Thylacine specimens after 1912. In light of these apparent contradictions, which in Batty's case is implicitly stated to have been created by Harrison himself, it seems likely that he misrepresented the destination of the Thylacine's he had purchased from Jordan and Batty, and that Walker was similarly misled. As to Harrison's motives, whilst speculative, it seems likely that he wished to conceal from his suppliers that he was re-selling their animals for sums far in excess of what he had paid for them and for what he could expect to receive from a Tasmanian institution.

Linnard *et al.* (2020)

The authors assert that the position outlined in Linnard *et al.* (2020) is correct, and that the evidence now overwhelmingly supports that the last of Beaumaris' Thylacines was captured and supplied by the Delphin family of Waratah. The *Advocate* of the 10th July 1930 (p.6) reported:

> *"Messrs. D. and A.97 Delphin were fortunate to capture a hyena[98] on Monday evening. It is not often that one hears of such captures. Needless to say, it is of much interest to many, especially the younger generation".*

This capture was made by 59 year old Dan Delphin and his 19 year old nephew Roy. Despite the scarcity of Thylacines during the 1930s, the following month Roy and his twin brother Gordon succeeded in capturing a second specimen:

> *"Some time ago Messrs. Delphin Bros., when snaring captured a hyena in the vicinity of Mt. Bischoff. Last week they were successful in capturing a smaller specimen of the same species"*[99].

Initially, the Delphins kept both of their Thylacines in a chicken coop / pigeon loft in the garden of their property on Hall Street (Waratah), where they were shown to visitors and spectators[100] [Fig.14]. Delphine Enkler, Roy and Gordon's niece, has preserved a detailed history of her family's experience with their Thylacines supported by a small archive of letters written by her mother (Dorothy), who as a child recalled participating in the animals' care. Delphine also spoke to Roy about his recollection of events, memories of which remained important to him throughout his life[101]. The second capture, a juvenile female, had died in the family's care by late September 1930 and its skin made into panels for a waistcoat for Dan Delphin (Linnard *et al.* 2020; Enkler, pers. com., 1/6/2020). During September 1930, Dan Delphin placed the following advertisement in the local press: "*Tasmanian Tiger. To be seen at the Burnie Show, Wednesday and Thursday, October 1st and 2nd*", suggesting by this time only one of the two Thylacines survived. On the 17th October 1930, *The Mercury* (p.8) reported:

> *"A Tasmanian wolf was purchased for the Beaumaris Zoo last week".* The article also notes that it was: "*… caught by a trapper at Waratah together with another which died from wounds".*

On the 30th October 1930, the HCCRC minutes record the agreement to pay the sum of £25 to "*R. Delphin*".

All of the points noted by Fleay (1934) can be identified in the Delphin family's testimony. The indicatory time scale given by Fleay: "*It has thriven in Hobart for the last three years*", deviates from the arrival date of the Delphin Thylacine only by a matter of nine weeks. Fleay's reference to the scar on the right hind leg is also reflected in the Delphins' testimony. On being shown a photograph of the last captive Thylacine Enkler (pers. com, 19/5/2021) recalled:

> *"Uncle Roy did confirm the snare mark when we showed him a picture of the Tasmanian Tiger from Hobart Zoo, pointing out the snare mark on the hind leg saying that's how he knew it was his tiger".*

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[94] Payments in Harrison's notebook indicate McKenzie was purchasing Thylacines for £50, whilst an order is recorded from the Perry Brother's Circus for three specimens at £75 each.

[95] Excluding this possibility, the only other payment to Harrison during this period was for £8/5/- recorded in the HCCRC as "*Proposed to be Paid*" on the 8/9/1930. In addition to being in the price range noted to be consistent with error evident in Paddle (2012), Jordan (1987) notes that he had received £20 for the specimen from Harrison. That Harrison, the state's foremost dealer in indigenous animals, would be willing to make a 60% loss on a species known to have been rare and in high demand is implausible, especially given that the following month an inexperienced 19 year old (Roy Delphin) would receive £25.

[96] Purchased by Harrison for between £4 (McIntyre, 1955) and £5 (Brass, 1980).

[97] 'A' Delphin is an error on behalf of the *Advocate*.

[98] Hyena - colloquial term for a Thylacine used in the State's north during the 1920s and 1930s.

[99] *Advocate*, 11/8/1930, p.6.

[100] Breaden (1994); Rist (pers. com., 28/9/2019) & Godfrey (1984).

[101] Illustrating the importance of the species to Roy Delphin, his headstone bears a gold engraving of his Thylacine, the captures being recalled in the eulogy at his funeral.

Precisely which image this was cannot be retrospectively confirmed; however, she believed it to be photograph HBZ 2[102] [Fig. 5]:

> *"I do not have the picture that Uncle Roy identified the Tiger. I believe it was the one with the Tiger with his nose pointing to the wire fencing which clearly showed the snare mark on the right hind leg, as that is the picture my family always referred to".*

This photograph is preserved in the Australian Museum collection as a postcard bearing the capitalised title: "*TAS MRCPL WOLF HOBART ZOO*"[103]. Whilst images of the Thylacine are commonly presented horizontally flipped, the correct orientation of HBZ 2 is usually preserved by virtue of the text being printed onto the image. Consequently, when referencing the photograph, it is likely Roy did so in its original orientation, thereby allowing him to correctly identify the location of the snare scar. Dorothy Delphin also referred to the scar (Gould, 1995-2000):

> *"The thylacine that ended up in the Hobart Zoo, was easy recognised by the (treadle) snare mark on its hind leg".*

The scar is clearly evident in two photographs (HBZ 2 & 12) and three moving sequences (Films 4, 6 & 13)[104] of the last captive. With reference to the films, none would have been readily accessible to the general public before the proliferation of the internet. Whilst the Delphins were in possession of a copy of HBZ 2, previously incorrectly dated to 1928, this image was not widely identified as portraying the last captive until 2014 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2014). With respect to HBZ 12 [Fig. 6], it was occasionally reproduced in the press and had been correctly identified as the last captive (Fleay, 1934). However, no discussion of the scar was recovered before Campbell (2017), which could only be accessed as an on-line resource. Yet Roy, who died in 1989, and Dorothy, whose reference to the scar cannot date to later than 2000, were both aware of this detail. Whilst the authors do not suggest that a snare mark would be unusual on a captive Thylacine, that Roy and Dorothy identified the mark long before it was widely discussed in the literature is significant. Fleay's reference that: "*…it was small when caught*", also concurs with the testimony surrounding the Delphins' captures. The immaturity of their Thylacines was noted by Breaden (Wisbey, 1994) who recalled:

> "*…they weren't full-grown tigers*", and "*I can remember seeing the two little tigers*".

Rist (pers. com., 28/9/19) stated:

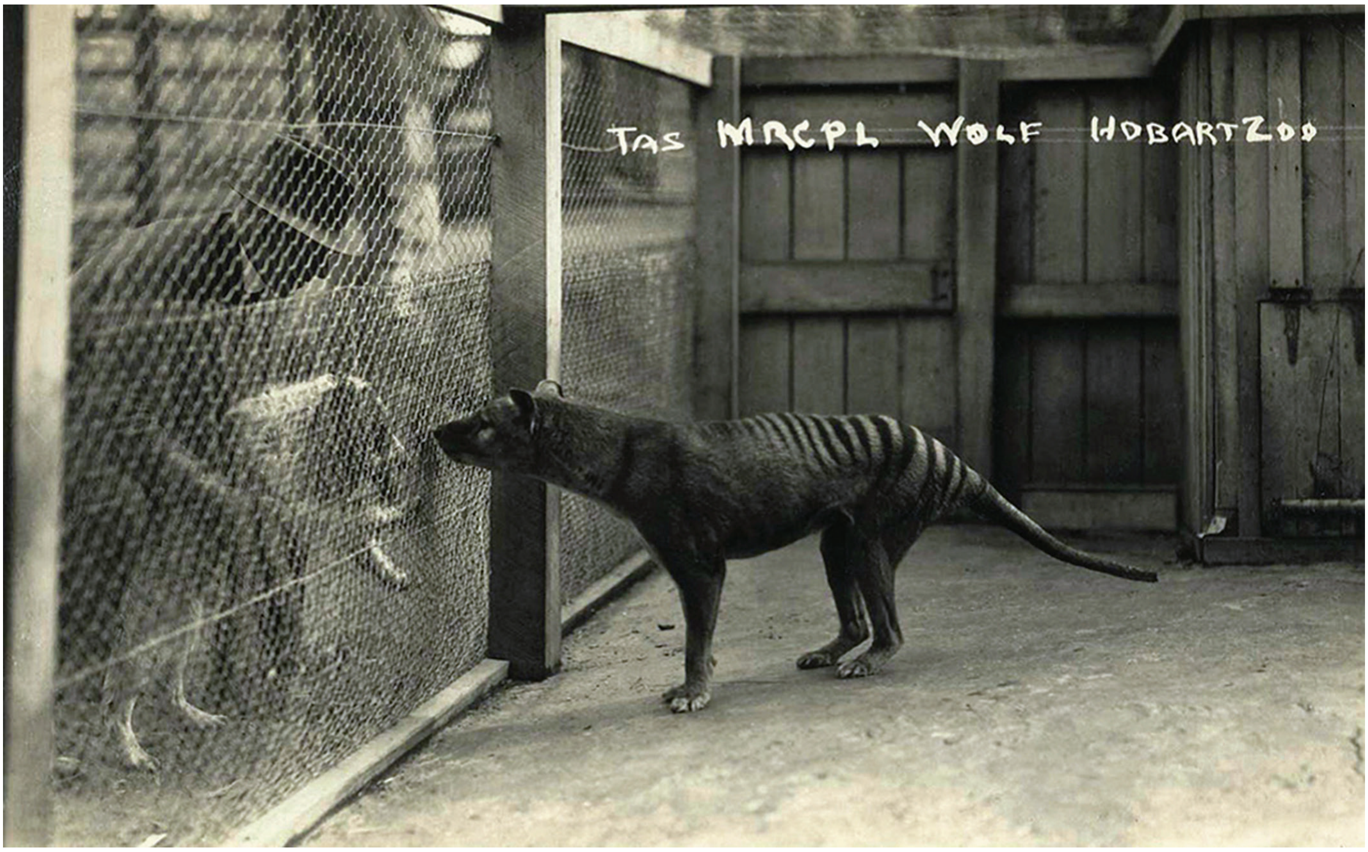

Figure 5. Photo: HBZ 2. Courtesy: Australian Museum (Ref: AMS: 139/4/20/1).

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[102] The photographs of Thylacines referenced within this paper use the Thylacine Image Registry (TIR) identifications as presented in Sleightholme & Campbell (2021^{a}).

[103] G. P. Whitley Papers, Australian Museum Archives, Ref: AMS 139/4/20/1.

[104] All the Thylacine films referenced within this paper use the identification format as presented in Sleightholme & Campbell (2021b).

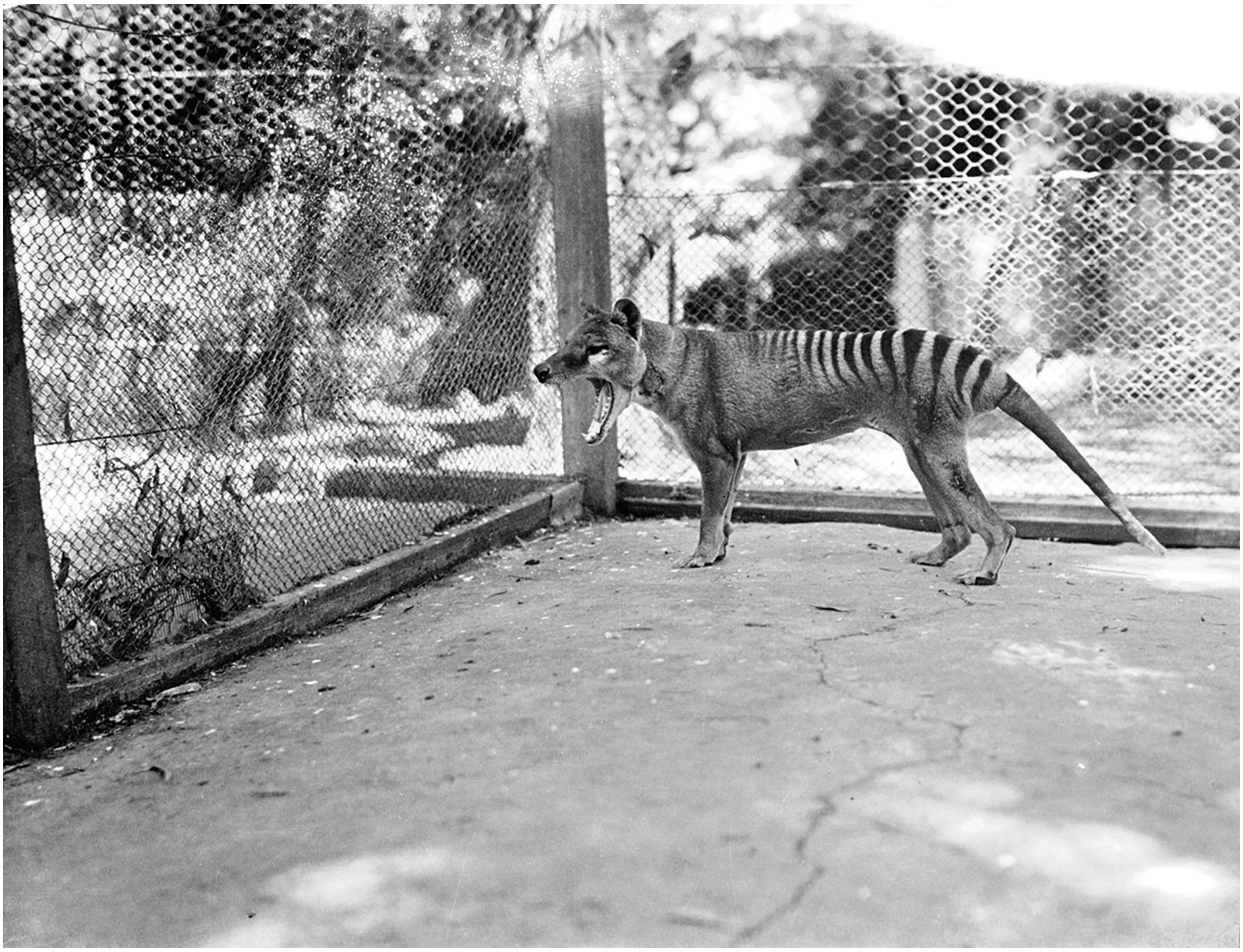

Figure 6. Photo: HBZ 12. Courtesy: David Fleay Trustees.

> *"My dad remembered the two young Tigers the Delphin Bros. had at Waratah in an old rebuilt chook pen".*

The sex of the Delphins' first capture had previously been an obstacle to its acceptance as the last captive. *The Mercury* of the 17th October 1930 (p.8) identified the Thylacine sold to the zoo as being female. However, this assignment is contradicted by the Delphin family's testimony. There is evidence that Dorothy Delphin differentiated between the sexes of the two captives, identifying the second capture which died in the family's care as *"she"*, but to the first capture which was sold to Beaumaris as *"it"*. Enkler (pers. com., 1/6/2020) stated:

> *"I assumed the first one was male as no one ever said it was a female, only that the second one was a female".*

Whilst no first-hand reference from Roy has been recovered regarding the second Thylacine, he is quoted as referring to the surviving Thylacine as *"he"* (Godfrey, 1984). Contemporary documentary evidence confirming that the Delphins' Thylacine was male comes from a film taken by the Reverend Harold Doyle[105] on the 23rd December 1930 (Linnard *et al.* 2020; Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021b)[106]. Captured on a hand cranked 9.5mm Baby Pathé cine camera, the quality of the footage is somewhat grainy; however, the penile mound is clearly visible confirming the subject's sex [Fig. 7 - red arrow]. Evidence from the HCCRC minutes also verifies that the only candidate for the Doyle and Stewart films is the Thylacine supplied by the Delphins. Prior to the arrival of the Delphin animal in October 1930, the death of the zoo's previous Thylacine had been recorded in the minutes on the 1st November 1929 and reiterated on the 2nd and 14th April 1930. The minutes contain no payment which could account for the purchase of a Thylacine between the November death report and the approval of the Delphin payment on the 30th October 1930. Further, no other potential Thylacine payments were identified from October 1930 to the cessation of the minutes in May 1932, by which time the last captive had arrived. It is simply not plausible that another Thylacine could have been acquired by the zoo without a record of its purchase.

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[105] Anglican vicar for the parish of Penguin.

[106] Film recovered in 2020.

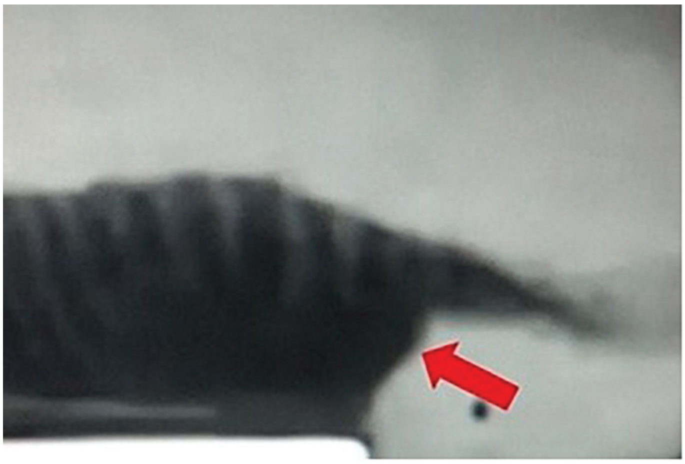

Figure 7. Still from Doyle film showing the position of the penile mound [red arrow]. Courtesy: John Doyle.

Paddle & Medlock (2023)

The position recently advocated by Paddle & Medlock (2023) proposes an alternative candidate for the last of Beaumaris' Thylacines, whose captivity span fell within a four month period (May-September 1936) after the end of the photographic record and during which time no direct evidence has been recovered. As previously noted, Paddle (2000) originally proposed that Elias Churchill sold Beaumaris Zoo its last Thylacine in 1933. He has since retracted this date in favour of the sale occurring in May 1936 (Paddle & Medlock, 2023) and now advocates an alternative scenario in which the subject of the Stewart / Fleay films and Sheppard photograph, identified in this paper as the last captive Thylacine, and in Paddle & Medlock as simply the penultimate specimen, died in May 1936. Paddle & Medlock argue that upon its death it was briefly replaced by an aged female, which is implied, though not implicitly stated in their paper, to have been captured by Churchill. However, Paddle subsequently named Churchill as the trapper on the TMAG website[107]:

> *"Dr. Paddle said the actual last thylacine, or endling of the species, was an old female animal that had been captured by trapper Elias Churchill from the Florentine Valley and sold to the zoo in the middle of May 1936".*

Paddle & Medlock (2023) conclude that this was the animal that died on the 7th September 1936. The authors argue that Paddle & Medlock's hypothesis is underpinned by their interpretation of a report prepared in 1937 by the Tasmanian Museum's taxidermist (William Cunningham) and contend that methodological concerns and inconsistencies can be identified in the evidence presented which warrants critical discussion.

Looking at each element of their argument, we provide a counter argument for why we believe they are mistaken in their interpretation of the evidence.

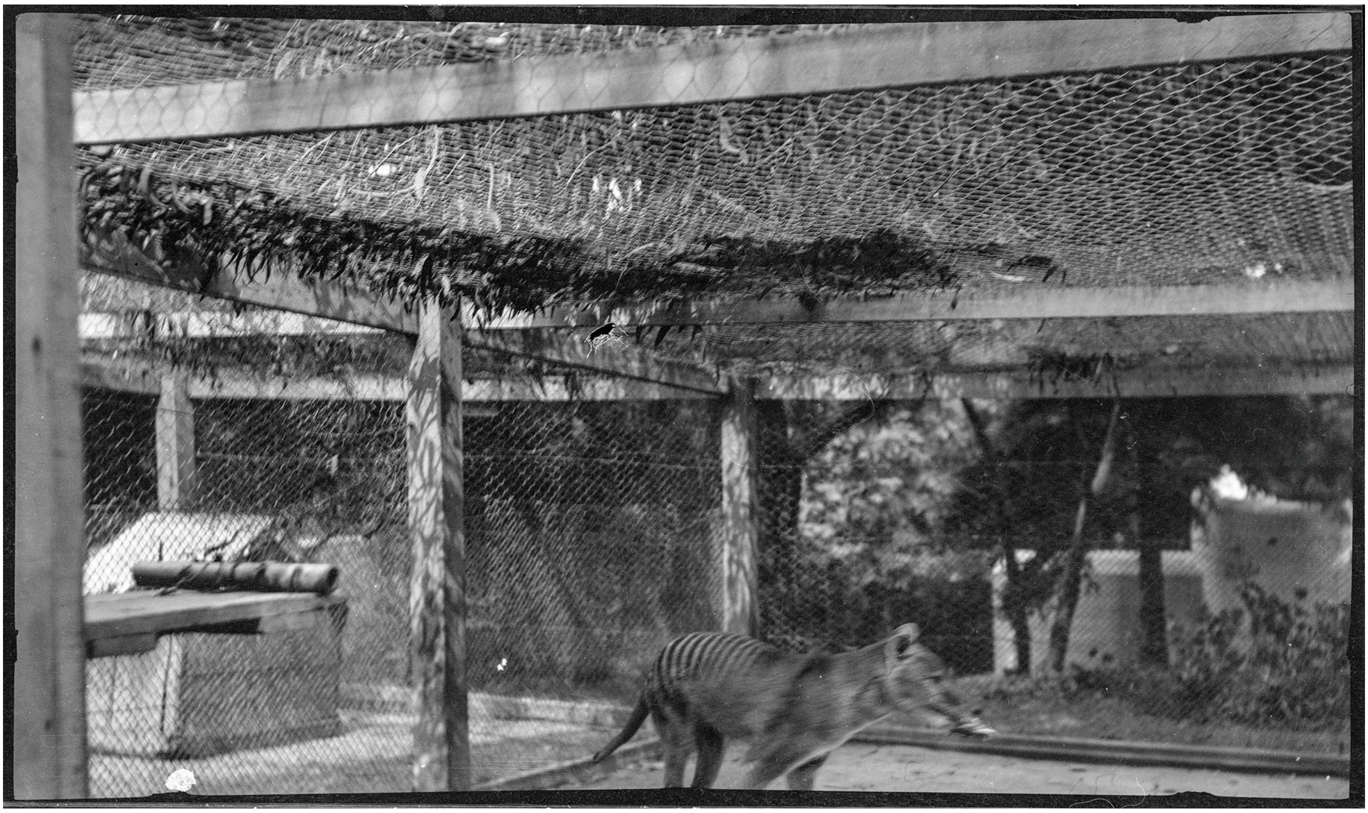

Figure 8. HBZ 30. Photo: Evelyn. T. Emmett. Courtesy: TAHO, Ref: AA375 / 1 /1014.

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[107] https://www.tmag.tas.gov.au/whats_on/newsselect/2022articles/thylacine_mystery_solved_in_tmag_collections. Accessed: 31/12/2022.

Interpretation of the Cunningham Report

In Paddle & Medlock's account of events, released to the media in advance of formal publication on the 5th December 2022, they state that body of the last captive Thylacine did arrive at the museum:

> *"The recent discovery of an unpublished 1936/1937 Annual Report for the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, for the first time, confirms that the last captive thylacine from Hobart Zoo was genuinely transferred to the Tasmanian Museum after its death".*

However, the authors note significant obstacles in accepting Paddle & Medlock's interpretation that Cunningham's report refers to the arrival of a single Thylacine specimen:

> *"This unpublished report includes an appended taxidermist's report for the year written by Cunningham, in which he records the thylacine among the list of the eight mammals received and significantly worked on during the year (1937)".*

A photograph of the ledger entry that Paddle & Medlock state supports the receipt of the body does not feature in their paper, but appeared on the TMAG Twitter account on the 8th December 2022 [Fig. 9]. As can be seen, there is no reference to Cunningham having *"worked"* on all the specimens listed, only that: *"During the last year we have received the following specimens"*. The only category which is listed as having been worked on: *"Seven birds were mounted for schools"*, are specifically identified and listed separately. Further, each of the specimens mounted in 1936-1937 must have been recent acquisitions, yet, as can be seen, not one of the six bird species listed in this group matches the six species within the preceding list of bird specimens *"received"*, indicating that the preceding mammal, bird, fish and reptile categories are not necessarily an inventory of recently externally acquired animals.

Closer inspection of the list of "*eight mammals*" reveals that this figure relates to the species count, and not the number of animals, which total 34 [1+5+2+3+5+7+8+3]. As is evident in figure 9, the reference to the Thylacine prefixed with '8' is the seventh, not the eighth entry on the list of mammal species. With reference to the numerical prefixes, only the first "*1 Brush Opossum*" and fifth "*5 platypus*", could be seen as sequential[108], with the second prefixed (5); the third (2); the fourth (3); the sixth (7); the seventh (8) and the eighth (3). Item numbers can be precluded as an explanation, as there are two separate entries in the mammal section denoted with '3' and all but two of the nine entries under birds[109] and fish are denoted with a '1'. The only conclusion that can be drawn from these figures is that they denote the number of specimens from each species[110]. Consistent with this interpretation, all mammal species are first listed by their common names, each of which was routinely contemporaneously used as a singular and plural[111]. Further indicating that the figures give the totals of specimens from each species, the number of birds *"mounted for schools"*, given as '7', matches the totals denoted before each species [1+2+1+1+1+1=7]. Consequently, it is clear that Cunningham's report cannot be interpreted as a reference to TMAG's receipt of a single Thylacine between July 1936 and August 1937[112]. Instead, it lists eight specimens, a number that could not plausibly have been acquired by the museum during that period. The authors question why this obvious contradiction has not been identified.

To account for the lack of further acquisition data for their alleged specimen, Paddle & Medlock simply state that it was not formally registered into the zoological collection because:

> *"After Alison Reid's departure from the zoo, there was no one who could provide the necessary details about the thylacine's captor, capture locality, capture date, potential age, longevity in the zoo, or cause of death".*

However, if such information was required, it fails to explain why neither of the zoo's full time keepers (Brett & Fleming), or alternatively Lipscombe, who they state

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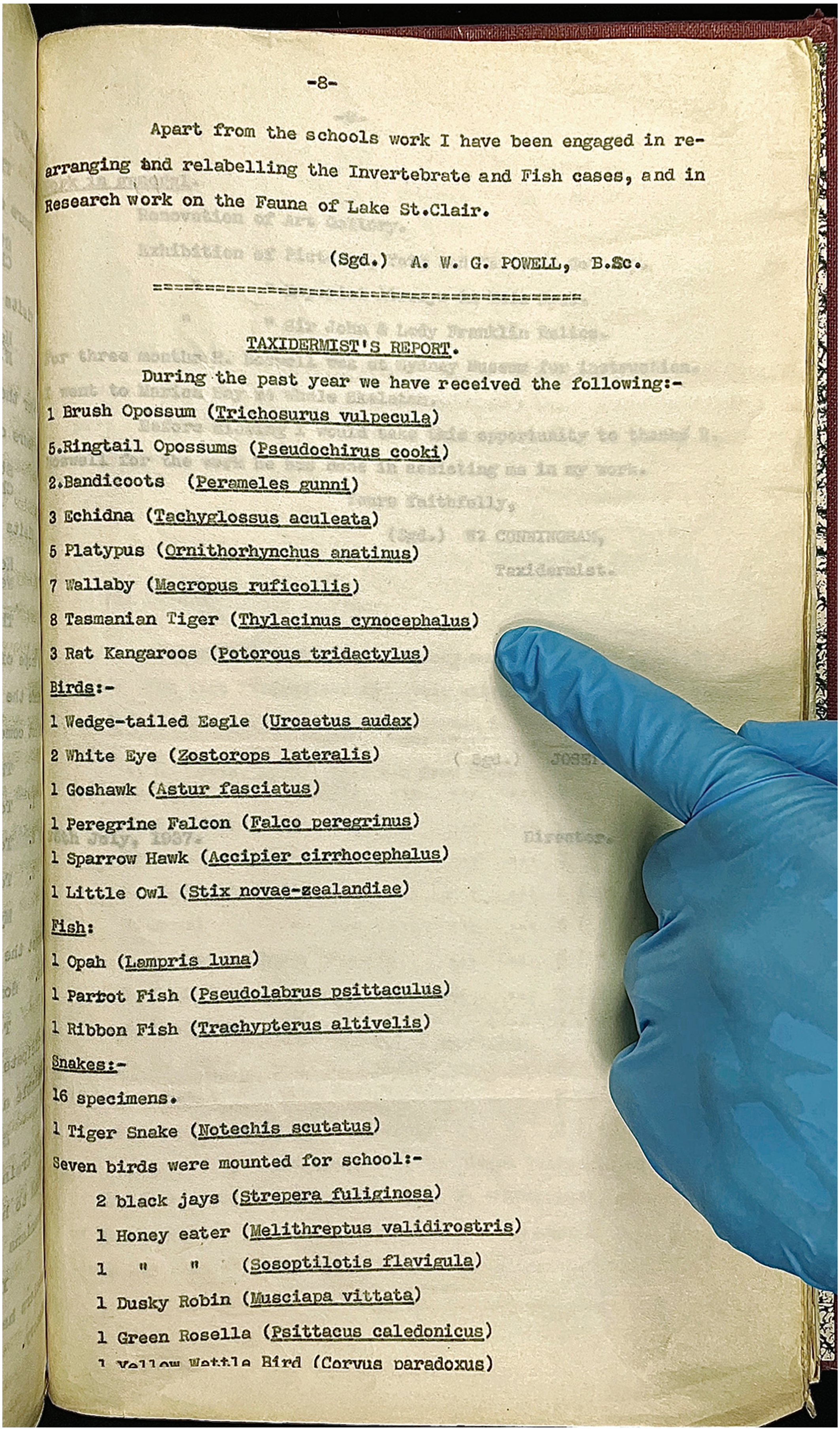
[108] This is repeated in the birds and fish, with only one of the 16 snakes being referred to by species.

[109] The list denoting the birds "mounted for schools" are listed separately and not included within this total.

[110] It is impossible to interpret the entry for snakes in any other way.

[111] In order to examine the vernacular use of the terms 'Tasmanian tiger', 'wallaby' and 'echidna' as plural or collective nouns, the authors carried out an advanced newspaper search for the terms on the Trove portal. Tasmanian tiger returned 2,217 results. The authors identified its plural or collective use in 10 instances within the first two pages of results: *Daily Post*, 11/7/1908, p.5; *The Daily Telegraph*, 28/8/1908, p.8; *The Queenslander*, 15/11/1934, p.40; *Examiner*, 10/3/1937, p.10; *The Mercury*, 25/3/1937, p.6; *The World's News*, 5/5/1937, p.19; *Advocate*, 22/6/1945, p.6; *Portland Guardian*, 20/9/1945, p.1; *Examiner*, 28/7/1952, p.2 & *The Canberra Times*, 28/12/1979, p.3. On examination of the 37,968 results for 'wallaby', the authors found 10 instances within the first pages in which the term was used as a plural in a context compatible with its use in figure 9: *Daily Post*, 7/7/1915, p.6; *Daily Telegraph*, 13/6/1916, p.4; *Examiner*, 28/5/1923, p.4; *Advocate*, 13/7/1929, p.6; *Circular Head Chronicle*, 1/7/1931, p.3; *The Mercury*, 6/6/1934, p.7; *Advocate*, 29/5/1942, p.4; *Examiner*, 2/19/1943, p.1; *Advocate*, 1/6/1950, p.14 & *King Island News*, 15/12/1971, p.1. Results in which the following word was pluralised, i.e., 'wallaby skins' were excluded. Reflecting their reduced commercial value relative to wallaby, 'echidna' returned fewer results (503). However, within these results the authors recovered two instances of the term being used as a plural in the appropriate context: *The Mercury*, 27/4/1864 & *Examiner*, 9/10/1953. The Australian Platypus Conservancy notes the regular use of 'platypus' as a plural in favour of 'platipodes' or 'platypuses'.

[112] An indication of the precise period referred to by the statement *"During the past year"* is not provided by Paddle & Medlock (2023). However, TMAG's Twitter account provides the report's publication date as the 27/ 7/1937.



-8-

Apart from the schools work I have been engaged in re-arranging and relabelling the Invertebrate and Fish cases, and in Research work on the Fauna of Lake St.Clair.

(Sgd.) A. W. G. POWELL, B.Sc.

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TAXIDERMIST'S REPORT.

During the past year we have received the following:-

1 Brush Opossum (Trichosurus vulpecula)
5.Ringtail Opossums (Pseudochirus cooki)
2.Bandicoots (Perameles gunni)
3 Echidna (Tachyglossus aculeata)
5 Platypus (Ornithorhynchus anatinus)
7 Wallaby (Macropus ruficollis)
8 Tasmanian Tiger (Thylacinus cynocephalus)
3 Rat Kangaroos (Potorous tridactylus)

Birds:-

1 Wedge-tailed Eagle (Uroaetus audax)
2 White Eye (Zostorops lateralis)
1 Goshawk (Astur fasciatus)
1 Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus)
1 Sparrow Hawk (Accipier cirrhocephalus)
1 Little Owl (Stix novae-zealandiae)

Fish:

1 Opah (Lampris luna)
1 Parrot Fish (Pseudolabrus psittaculus)
1 Ribbon Fish (Trachypterus altivelis)

Snakes:-

16 specimens.
1 Tiger Snake (Notechis scutatus)

Seven birds were mounted for school:-

2 black jays (Strepera fuliginosa)
1 Honey eater (Melithreptus validirostris)
1 " " (Sosoptilotis flavigula)
1 Dusky Robin (Musciapa vittata)
1 Green Rosella (Psittacus caledonicus)
1 Yellow Wattle Bird (Corvus paradoxus)

Figure 9. W. Cunningham's Taxidermist's Report dated 26th July 1937. Source: *Annual Report of the Trustees for the Year 1936-7*, (unpublished), Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery, Hobart. (Ref: R2000.10.240.2).

purchased the animal from its captor approximately four months earlier, could not have been asked to provide it, as it would have undoubtedly been these same individuals who would have physically provided the museum with any specimens from the zoo, or in Lipscombe's case, liaised with the museum and authorised their transfer.

Offering a potential explanation for why eight Thylacines were referred to within Cunningham's report, the entry is preceded at the head of the page with:

> *"Apart from the schools work I have been engaged in rearranging and relabelling* (sic) *the invertebrate and fish cases, and in research work on the fauna of Lake St. Clair".*

Given the relevant page of the report begins with reference to work undertaken on the museum's existing collection, the authors would question if the reference simply refers to the re-assignment of existing specimens as part of Arthur Powell's[113] reorganisation of the TMAG collection as detailed by Paddle & Medlock themselves:

> *"During this operation, most thylacine osteology specimens were registered into the new system, even those lacking basic data. Skulls and skeletons could provide important data for research into the now almost extinct thylacine because precise measurements could be taken. In contrast, the usefulness of tanned skins and mounted specimens for research were deemed minimal. Morphometric data from mounts rarely represent the living animal, because the accuracy of the final mount depends largely on the skill of the taxidermist. Prior to X-rays and scanning technology, bones contained within the mounts (usually the skull and limb bones) were inaccessible for research purposes. Therefore, while skeletal specimens were incorporated into Pearson's new scientific research collection, mounted specimens and skins were not".*

The authors have identified a further eight areas in which they found contradictions to Paddle & Medlock's hypothesis.

1. Preserved remains

Paddle & Medlock (2023) state that on TMAG's receipt of a previously unknown female from Beaumaris, its skin and skeleton were preserved by Cunningham for educational purposes and that these remain in TMAG's collection today as specimens A1283 (skin)[114] and A1546 (disarticulated skeleton). They contend that these specimens constitute the remains of the final Thylacine to be displayed at Beaumaris.

Paddle & Medlock state that there was, "…*no formal record or acknowledgment of the arrival of the last thylacine at the museum*". However, only one disarticulated skeleton (A1546)115 is described as being without acquisition data, and two skins, (A1281 and A1283) are noted to be without provenance, "*save that one of them was purchased from a furrier in the 1930s*". The conditions of the skins are described in detail, and the preparation of A1283 is evaluated to be more consistent with the techniques employed by a conservator within a formal collection, whilst the presence of what appear to be nail holes around the edge of A1281 is correctly assessed as being characteristic of the method used to tan skins in the field. The authors agree that if it were possible to establish that Cunningham's report did refer to the receipt of a single specimen, this would be persuasive evidence to link it to A1283 and A1546; however, the relevant entry's numerical prefix (8) excludes this interpretation. Further, aside from them sharing a lack of provenance, no substantive evidence is provided in their argument as to why the unprovenanced skin and skeleton, each noted as having been stored separately, should be connected, and no indication has been given as to what controls were in place to determine the robustness of their association. They merely state that: "*The A1546 skull fits exactly with the head on the A1283 skin*". Whilst the authors do not immediately dismiss this conclusion, they argue that this comparison is not confirmatory, and would argue that such a connection could only be verified by DNA analysis. The authors would also question the significance of the lack of acquisition data for these specimens, as they note inconsistencies with a number of the provenances provided by Paddle & Medlock.

Within TMAG's archive of Pearson's correspondence is a letter dated the 26th June 1941 from Melbourne dentist John Heath requesting a Thylacine skull for the Royal College of Surgeons (London). A note is written on its reverse that was undoubtedly drafted at TMAG [Fig. 10], as the attached signature can be found on seven letters to Pearson within the archive from seven individuals representing four institutions between 1939 and 1947[116].

Further, written in the same hand and pen in the left hand margin on the front of the letter is an annotation stating:

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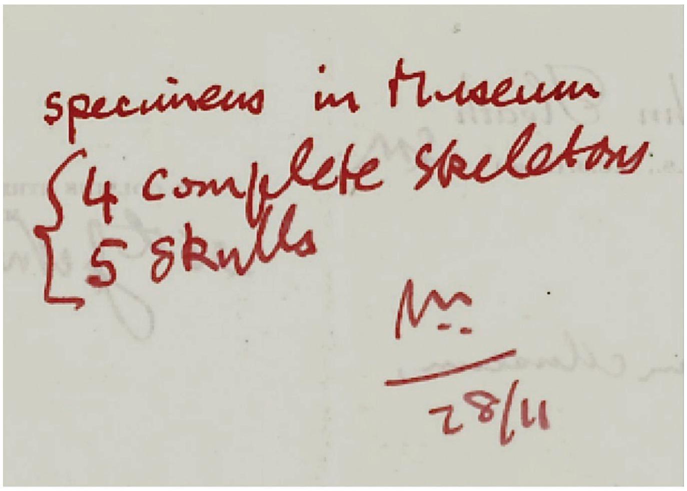
[113] Arthur Powell was TMAG's dedicated education officer.

[114] The sixth revision of the International Thylacine Specimen Database (2017) lists 8 skins, both partial and complete (A1281; A1282; A1283; A1284; A1285a; A1285b; A1287; & A3235) and 4 taxidermies (A1298; A1299; A1300 & A1400) currently held in the TMAG collection.

[115] Paddle & Medlock also note that A1546 was discovered in a cupboard associated with the education collection by the testimony of a "*museum cadet*" during 1945-46.

[116] The same signature in the same pen appears on correspondence from: 1) H. Munro Fox, The University of Edgbaston (Birmingham), 7/7/1939; 2) A. R. Penfold, Technological Museum (Sydney), 22/9/1944; 3) J. Monohan Lewis, 11/10/1944; 4) Arthur Aimes, The Australian College of Dentistry (Melbourne), 7/5/1945; 5) J. F. Colyer, Royal College of Surgeons (London), 3/8/1945; 6) J. Wanderly, The Australian College of Dentistry (Melbourne), 11/3/1946 & 7) Frederick Wood Jones, Royal College of Surgeons (London), 21/2/1947.



specimens in Museum
{4 complete skeletons
{5 skulls

28/11

Figure 10. Note on the reverse of Heath's letter of the 21st June 1941 detailing the number of osteological remains held at the Tasmanian Museum.

"*Trustees,* [signature], *28/11*[117]" followed by "*P.T.O*". The Thylacine is the only species referred to in Heath's letter and the only candidate for the four skeletons and five skulls referenced on its reverse. Paddle & Medlock correctly note that there are six complete skeletons in TMAG's collection; two articulated specimens (A312 & A315) and four disarticulated specimens (A295, A297, A300 & A1546). They state that all except A1546 are listed as having been acquired before 1934 based on the original prefix letter 'D' being used between 1913 and February 1934. Yet, the note on the reverse of Heath's letter specifying "*four complete skeletons*" would seem to imply that two of the skeletons were acquired after the 26th November 1941. Suggesting an error in the following statement, and that at least one of the osteological specimens described is incorrectly provenanced, Paddle & Medlock state:

> *"The Tasmanian Museum currently holds two articulated and nine disarticulated thylacine skeletons in its collection. Both articulated skeletons, A312 and A315, have a known history and were articulated in 1922. Three complete disarticulated skeletons are stored in separate lots indicating that all bones originate from single animals, and are registered as A295, A297 and A300. All five of the above specimens are transcribed with original registration numbers prefixed with the letter D, a system used to register all vertebrate specimens from 1913 until Pearson's arrival. All were re-registered into Pearson's newly introduced system as vertebrate osteology specimens, prefixed by the letter L (Huxley, 2010). Five of the six remaining disarticulated skeletons are incomplete, consisting of only a few bones or the remains left over from mounted taxidermic preparation. One complete disarticulated skeleton, A1546, remains without provenance".*

Further error is detectable in the provenance supplied for TMAGs mounted taxidermy specimens identified as A1298, A1299, A1300 and A1400. Paddle & Medlock state:

> *"During the years 1926 to 1928, the museum had acquired three thylacines, a large wild-caught adult male*[118]*, a juvenile female and a small adult female, (both from Hobart Zoo)".*

Paddle (2012) specifies that Beaumaris supplied TMAG with two specimens during 1928, the details of which appear consistent with this description:

> *"...one of the newly arrived cubs, a female (xxi). Its skin was in good condition, and the cub was sold to the Tasmanian Museum, where it was mounted by Alison Reid".*

And:

> *"The only specimen whose body was deemed worthy of preservation was that of a juvenile female that died on 18th July 1928".*

However, one of Paddle's alleged specimens (HBZ xxi) is revealed by the HCCRC minutes (26/12/1927) to have been "*60 possums*" and a "*quantity of wire netting and roofing*". Consequently, this specimen can be excluded from having been prepared as a mount by Alison Reid, thereby leaving one of the specimens[119] with no provenance. Paddle (2012) provides no acquisition number for the animal stated to have died on the 18th July 1928. However, the potential candidates for this specimen comprise:

- HBZ xx – dismissed on the same grounds as HBZ xxi,
- HBZ xxiv – unevidenced and presented at an implausible price point,
- HBZ xxvi or xxvii – erroneous purchases attributed to a misunderstanding of Reid's location and misinterpretation of a payment made for his travel expenses.

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[117] The note appears to have been written on the June letter in response to a further request by Heath of the 26/11/1941 alluded to in a reply from Pearson dated to the 12/12/1941.

[118] Hartnett specimen.

[119] A1299 is identified by Medlock as being donated by Beaumaris during March 1928 (Williams, pers. com., 28/8/2019), therefore confirming that this is the specimen that it is synonymous with Paddle's (2012) HBZ xxi. However, appearing to also refer to specimen HBZ xxi, the ITSD (2017) lists A1300, which is not included in Medlock's list, as being purchased for £10 on the 27/3/1928, and notes that taxidermy A1299 was purchased for £5 on the 8/7/1928, an approximate acquisition date Medlock (Williams, pers. com., 28/8/2019) attaches to specimen A1230, which appears in no other source. Notably, the only Thylacine death recorded in the HCCRC in 1928 is the three legged Mullins adult female on the 27/3/1928, which is absent from Jackson's assessment of numbers in June 1928, but present in image HBZ 27 taken in April 1927 (*The Daily Telegraph*, 8/4/1927, p.1). The HCCRC record that this specimen was, "*...sold to the museum for £10*", but it does not appear to correspond to any specimen at TMAG.

Additionally, the death of a *"small adult female"* at Beaumaris in July 1928 is contradicted by the primary testimony of Sydney Jackson who visited the zoo in June 1928[120]. Paddle (2012) proposes no further acquisitions in 1928 after the 17th April. However, Jackson stated that during his visit:

> *"Two specimens were then on view, and I studied them very carefully"*[121].

The Thylacines seen by Jackson, both mature specimens, had been present at the zoo since 1924[122]. One of the Thylacines was the last of the Mullin's cubs who survived until October 1929, the other was the subject of the Jackson photograph[123], the Harrison female, whose stripe pattern does not match any specimen in TMAG. Consequently, there is no provision for the death of a specimen corresponding to Paddle's description in July 1928, leaving two of the four mounted specimens at TMAG with doubtful or incorrect provenances.

The authors have also identified a further inconsistency in TMAG's cataloguing of skins and mounted specimens between a list provided by Medlock (Williams, pers. com., 28/8/2019) and that outlined in Paddle & Medlock (2023). Skin A1281 is listed as being purchased from Paget's furriers in September 1937 (Williams, pers. com., 28/8/2019), but presented as having *"no clear provenance"* by Paddle & Medlock (2023). Further, despite stating that: *"The last thylacine export from the Tasmanian Museum occurred on 1st May 1924"*, Paddle & Medlock's assessment of the specimens at TMAG do not acknowledge the whereabouts of the skin or skeleton from the body Reid stated had been purchased from Beaumaris[124] by the museum around 1928-1929[125].

It is evident from the above considerations that inconsistencies exist in TMAG's cataloguing. Given that the museums staff could not have listed the erroneous Beaumaris' specimens during 1928, and that the provenances of a number of specimens have been recently revised or reassigned, confirms that at least a proportion of the archival information cited is the result of recent research, rather than being sourced from a contemporaneous primary record. The authors suggest that errors can be detected in this process which in turn introduces doubt into the accuracy of the cataloguing of the remaining specimens, thereby undermining any potential significance in the apparent lack of acquisition data for A1546. The authors further argue that the statement: *"…provenance of six of the eight flat skins was determined using historical records"* warrants further caution before accepting the provenance of these six specimens, or that the lack of accompanying information for A1283 is anything but characteristic of the collection.

2. Churchill as the captor

Paddle & Medlock (2023) associate their position with that proposed by Smith (1981) by reconstructing the chronology of the apocryphal 1933 Churchill capture, stating:

> *"Alison* [Reid] *certainly associated the arrival of the last known thylacine with Elias Churchill (Paddle, 2000)"* and *"Churchill consistently claimed to have caught and brought the last thylacine to Hobart Zoo".*

However, both of these statements are explicitly contradicted by evidence. Paddle (2000) does not include any reference to a belief on Reid's part that Churchill captured the zoo's last Thylacine[126]. Further, the only relevant testimony by Alison Reid which is cited contradicts the date given by Paddle & Medlock (2023). Paddle (2000) states that during an interview of the 26th June 1992, Reid informed him that the last Thylacine had arrived *"about a year before my father died"*, implying a date around December 1934. Consequently, the authors note that had Reid provided testimony consistent with the supply of a Thylacine in 1936, it is not cited in favour of a statement in which she expressly contradicted it. Churchill never claimed to have captured Beaumaris' last Thylacine, nor did he make any reference to this individual or to the notion of a final captive. Churchill left no other verifiable testimony beyond that to Sharland (1957) and *The Mercury* (1964). In support of their argument, Paddle & Medlock (2023) have chosen to cite an interview that Bailey (2013) claimed he carried out with Churchill in 1969. It is worth noting that Haygarth (2022) expressed some doubt as to the authenticity of this alleged interview, and whilst the account does contain verifiable details, all can be readily found within the literature available in 2013. The authors have identified

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[120] In the *Sydney Mail* of the 12/1/1938 (p.46), Jackson states his visit had taken place in July. However, *The Mercury* of the 6/6/1928 (p.7) reported that Jackson: "*…has expressed himself as pleasurably impressed by his visits to the Beaumaris Zoo*" confirming his visit had taken place during the previous month.

[121] *Sydney Mail*, 12/1/1938, p.46.

[122] Accompanying Jackson's article is a photograph of an adult female with a flaccid abdomen characteristic of the subject of 14 of the 34 images recovered from the Domain, the sole candidate for this individual is the female purchased from Harrison in 1924. In the HCCRC of the 14/4/1930 Reid stated of the Thylacine whose death was recorded on the 1/11/1929, that it was "*was about six years old*". That Reid could estimate its age at the time of death suggests he was aware of its age on arrival and that it was likely to have arrived as a juvenile. Six years would be consistent with the age of a surviving Mullins cub, such as is known to have been in the zoo in 1927 when *The Daily Telegraph* (8/4/1927, p.1) reported that of the three specimens then present one had been "*born at the zoo*". Whilst this phrase is not technically correct, it strongly implies one of the three specimens had arrived as a dependant cub.

[123] Thylacine Image Registry ID HBZ 7.

[124] Whilst this may appear at odds with Lord's statements of 1929 and 1930 that the Museum had not received a specimen since the Hartnett male, it is apparent that in the context in which the remarks were made, that of the species' increasing rarity, he was referring to wild specimens.

[125] HCCRC: 10/4/1935, (Note - the page on which this entry is recorded is mislabelled as 10/8/1935).

[126] Whilst Alison Reid is referenced on pages 64-5, 96, 186-90, 191-5, 200, 206 & 224, Churchill appears only on pages 190-191. Whilst they both appear on pages 190-91, there is no suggestion that Reid referred to Churchill, nor any link between the specific contexts in which they are mentioned.

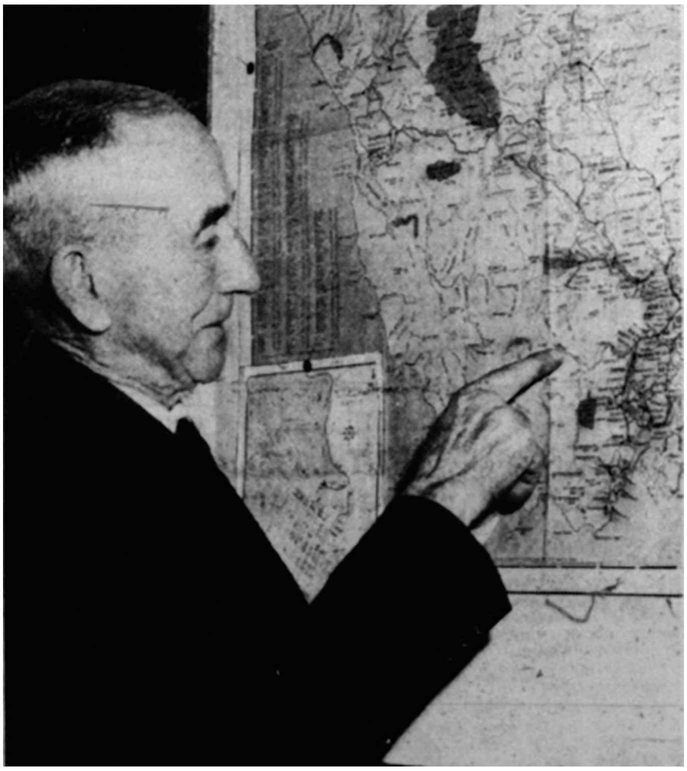

Figure 11. Elias Churchill pointing to his capture location in 1957. Photo courtesy: *The Mercury*, 19th September 1964, p.1.

six fundamental flaws where the testimony contradicts the evidence, or contains errors which could not reasonably be accepted as having been made by Churchill:

- Bailey quotes Churchill as stating, *"I reckon I must have trapped close to a dozen over the years"*. This statement conflicts with the figure (eight) verified as being given by Churchill to Sharland (1957) and *The Mercury* (1964).
- Bailey states Churchill claimed eight live captures, whereas he described only one live capture to Sharland and to *The Mercury*.
- Two errors are attributed to Churchill regarding his hunting companions of the 1920s. One is named as *"Jimmy Loveluck from Fitzgerald"*, whereas it was Harold Loveluck who was Churchill's companion and Thylacine captor (HCCRC: 11/9/1923). Further, Walter Mullins is said to have come from Ouse, rather than Swansea (Lewis, pers. com., 30/11/2017). This error is especially unlikely as both Churchill and Mullins originated in the south-east.
- Bailey treats Bond's (Crawford, 1951) and Churchill's descriptions of enticing the captive Thylacine to eat as two separate incidents. Given each account describes Churchill eventually solving the problem in the same way, rather than approaching one with the benefit of experience, they cannot be two separate accounts.
- Perhaps mistaking the date of Beaumaris' acquisition of the Mullins group (February 1924) for their date of capture, Bailey claims Churchill stated: *"It was hot as hell…a real flaming stinker of a day"*, and that: *"We were scared as hell we'd lose the lot of them because of the heat. They're an animal that suffers greatly from heat stress because they don't sweat like you and I. We had to stop at every creek we came to along the way and douse them with water"*. In fact, the Mullins group was captured during the winter, not the summer of 1923 (*The Mercury*, 12/2/1924, p.6).
- Referring to Churchill's hut, Bailey quotes Churchill as stating: *"Me and Bert Harris knocked it up in about a week using trees we felled on site. It did the job well until I left it just after the war"*. However, Bailey mistook Churchill's hut for a later structure situated along the Adamsfield Fitzgerald track (Haygarth, 2022). Contrary to Bailey's belief, there is no reference to the structure after 1925 (Haygarth, 2022) and an image taken in 1925 shows it in a dilapidated state which is unlikely to have survived until 1945. Further, Churchill left the area after 1934, but returned to Hobart during the early 1940s exposing his supposed comment that he left after the war as spurious.

Consequently, the authors argue that the evidence confirms that Bailey (2013) should be viewed as a tertiary synthesis of his then understanding of the information contained in disparate sources, and not as the presentation of Churchill's primary testimony. The discrepancy in numbers between those verifiable as being provided by Churchill and those claimed by Bailey can be resolved in only one of three ways:

1. Churchill misled both Sharland and *The Mercury* by understating the number of captures he made,
2. Churchill misled Bailey by overstating the number of captures he made,
3. Bailey embellished the interview from the existing literature.

Given the detectable errors in Bailey's account, the authors argue that the latter explanation is the more likely. In both Sharland (1957) and *The Mercury* (1964) Churchill consistently described the capture of one live Thylacine, stating to Sharland that this animal was male. Paddle & Medlock then state:

> *"After capture, the thylacine was pack-horsed to Fitzgerald and then railed to Hobart".*

It is clear that this unreferenced passage is based on statements drawn from Sharland's (1957) discussion of the Churchill capture: *"The tiger, after being trussed up again, was taken to Tyenna on the back of a pack horse"* and on Gossage's (1981) account[127] of seeing Churchill's

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[127] Cited in Paddle (2000).

Thylacine onboard a train at National Park[128] station, or alternatively, on Bailey's (2013) composite account of these sources. Gossage's testimony raises significant objections to Churchill's capture occurring in 1936. Edith Gossage (née Marriott) grew up at National Park, but by 1935[129] was residing in Bothwell where she can be placed until November 1937[130]. Also residing at Bothwell was Edith's sister Matilda and her brother in law Trooper Arthur Fleming[131]. In April 1937 Fleming was tasked by the Fauna Board to lead an expedition in search of the Thylacine[132] and to collate recent evidence of the species[133]. There is no indication that the Fauna Board were ever aware of a capture in 1936. In fact, they made explicit statements to the contrary in February 1937[134]. Consequently, had Gossage witnessed a specimen en route to Hobart in 1936 she would have had to deliberately withhold this from her immediate family, who, as she would have been aware, were actively seeking such information.

In *The Mercury* of the 22nd August 1934 (p.2) Churchill gave his residential address as the Duke of York hotel, Argyle Street (Hobart) and stated his intention to apply for the premises' license, which was duly granted[135]. However, in *The Mercury* of the 22nd March 1935 (p.6) Churchill announced he was transferring the license to Frederick John Keating. Paddle & Medlock (2023) state:

> "*He* (Churchill) *quit the legal, licensed hotel business in March 1935, and "went bush" once again (Haygarth, 2017*[b]*)".*

Whilst Haygarth does state that Churchill "*quit*" the hotel in 1935, the authors note that the phrase "*went bush*" is not used. Therefore the quotation marks within which it is presented should be seen as denoting that the phrase is a colloquialism, and not that it is a direct quote from Haygarth (2017[b]) who makes no reference to Churchill's actions after leaving the hotel. The only relevant location for the purposes of Paddle & Medlock's discussion is the site of Churchill's alleged capture[136], the Florentine Valley. The authors would caution any suggestion that Churchill returned to this area after 1935, home to the family of his second wife Greta[137], as for circumstances that will become apparent, he would have been unlikely to receive a warm welcome. A Salvation Army search[138] carried out for Churchill alleged that he had abandoned Greta and their children for the hotel's "*scullery maid*". Confirming this scenario to be correct, following Churchill's declaration of intent to transfer the hotel license to Keating, he is next referred to in articles of the 1st June 1937 in the *Examiner* (p.5) and *Advocate* (p.5) which place him in the Launceston area[139] and describe him as cohabiting with a former Hobart woman who would become his third and final wife. There is no evidence of Churchill's presence in the south again until his military records list his place of enrolment into the Volunteer Defence Corps (est. 1940) as Hobart. As Haygarth (2022) states in his consideration of Churchill's whereabouts after 1935: "*There is no evidence that he ever returned to the Florentine*". Logically, there would have been little motive for him to travel approximately 144km from Launceston into an area where his welcome would be far from cordial, within a closed game season which would have not have allowed him to make any significant profit from his captures, and during a period when Australian skins were faring poorly on the London market[140].

3. Game laws and the need for secrecy?

To explain the lack of documentary evidence for the purchase by Beaumaris of the alleged female Paddle & Medlock (2023) state:

> *"At first, it may seem unusual that the snaring and live capture of such a rare animal as a thylacine in May 1936 did not rate a written mention or photograph in the press, or generate publicity for the zoo that had a thylacine once again on display; but closer inspection resolves this anomaly. In Tasmania, the usual autumn and winter furred-game season was closed in 1936 for all but King Island, a locality lacking in thylacines. On mainland Tasmania, ground-based snaring, to catch kangaroo and wallaby was prohibited from May to July 1936 (Hobart Mercury, 1/4/1936), thus the possession of a thylacine during this time by a licensed trapper, not supposed to be ground-based snaring, was certainly dubious. Consequently, its captor would have been keen to avoid publicity that would attract the attention of the Animals and Birds Protection Board, as well as the constabulary, and result in a fine".*

No record could be found of the *Hobart Mercury*, so the supplied reference cannot be verified. However, *The Mercury* (1/4/1936, p.8) did publish an article under the same title on this date, which states:

> *"Mr. Hedberg said he had been through the Lake country recently, and the general expression of opinion was in favour of a closed season. He moved: That the season for 1936 be closed for both kangaroo and opossum. Mr.*

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[128] National Park was a small settlement near to Mt. Field NP.

[129] *The Mercury*, 22/11/1935, p.1.

[130] Mrs. E. R. Gossage is recorded at Bothwell in *The Mercury* of the 22/11/1935 (p.1) and her husband again as "E. R. Gossage (Bothwell)" in *The Mercury* of the 2/11/1937 (p.2).

[131] Police officer and agent of the Fauna Board.

[132] *The Mercury*, 21/4/1937, p.9 & 17/11/1937, p.5.

[133] *Advocate*, 21/4/1937, p.7.

[134] *The Mercury*, 10/2/1937, p.2.

[135] *The Mercury*, 29/10/1934, p.2

[136] 'Alleged' applies to a capture dated to 1933 or 1936.

[137] Formerly Greta Squires, whose father, blacksmith Henry Squires, can be placed at Tyenna until at least May 1935 (*The Mercury*, 2/5/1935, p.2).

[138] The search results are published on Churchill's "Story" on Ancestry.com.

[139] The census records Churchill as a mill hand at Burns Creek at this time (Haygarth, 2022).

[140] *The Mercury*, 1/4/1937, p.8.

> *Davies seconded the motion and it was agreed to".*

Consequently, the authors assert that this is almost certainly the relevant article within which the period May–July is not mentioned and it should not be inferred that there was an embargo on these species or ground snaring solely within these months[141]. The correct interpretation is that no game season would be declared 'open' during 1936, thus prohibiting the hunting of wallaby (referred to as kangaroo) or possum by any means during that year. However, as the distinction between possum, wallaby and Thylacine was self-evident, trappers would have been aware that no game laws would have been breached by the capture of the latter by ground snaring or by any other means. Prior to the 1st July 1936, the Thylacine was protected only during December[142], and no pre-arranged license was required for its killing or capture outside of this period (see: Contextualising the death of the last captive). The legal position applicable to May 1936 had been made clear in *The Mercury* of the 4th July 1934 (p.9) by Colonel John Lord[143] (Chairman of the State Fauna Board):

> *"The Chairman (Colonel J. E. C. Lord) said that any person was at liberty to take the animals, but the consent of the Board had to be secured before they could be sent out of the State".*

As he was also the State Police Commissioner, there is no more authoritative source on the legalities of this question than Lord[144]. Provided the capture had been made outside of December, Lord's comments confirm that it was perfectly legal to capture and sell a Thylacine within Tasmania during May 1936, thereby removing any potential motive for reticence on the part of a potential captor.

Despite suggesting the need for secrecy, Paddle & Medlock create a paradox within their hypothesis by then stating that the animal's captor had openly transported it to Hobart by train[145], therefore negating any attempt at secrecy on their part[146]. As for the HCCRC, even after the introduction of full legal protection in June 1936, their attempts to secure a replacement Thylacine were openly recorded in the minutes (16/9/1936, 17/2/1937 & 3/3/1937) and publicly reported in *The Mercury* (9/3/1937, p.2). Consequently, the suggestion that evidence is potentially absent due to either party's need or inclination to act covertly is explicitly contradicted, leaving the lack of primary evidence of a Thylacine purchase in May 1936 within the HCCRC minutes or press wholly unexplained. With or without the need for secrecy, the alleged arrival of a female specimen at TMAG raises an additional paradox. On the 9th February 1937, the Fauna Board (including Pearson) met to discuss the current status of the Thylacine. The meeting was summarised as follows:

> *"In view of the lack of authentic information to the contrary, members of the Animals and Birds Protection Board are concerned lest the Tasmanian Thylacinus (native tiger) should have become extinct. Reliable data indicates that it is some years since the last tiger was seen in the State, and while it is generally accepted that specimens are extremely rare, it is feared that the animal, which is of the greatest scientific interest, may have ceased to exist" (The* Mercury, *10/2/1937, p.2).*

Based on this statement, Pearson must have been oblivious to any recent capture or he would have relayed this information to the board. His specific knowledge of recent evidence for the species is provided in the replies to the following exchange:

> *"Mr. A. W. Burbury: The scheme he mentions is all right, but the trouble is to catch the beggars. We have no reliable evidence of the present existence anywhere of these animals, have we?*
>
> *The Chairman: No.*
>
> *Mr. Burbury: Then we do not know that the animal is not extinct.*
>
> *The Chairman: No – 'that is our job to find out if there is any place where a tiger has been seen of recent months, even of recent years.*

After which, it was stated that:

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[141] Nor is this the precise period for which a game season was necessarily open.

[142] Which was then believed to be the month the species bred (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2014).

[143] Cousin to Clive Lord.

[144] Whilst this statement was made within an open game season, it was 'open' only for possum (*The Mercury*, 28/4/1934, p.9), which as an arboreal species were either captured on pole snares set into trees (Haygarth, pers. com., 7/1/2023) or more generally lamp-lighted and shot (Haygarth, pers. com., 25/10/2017). Possum were not primarily captured in ground snares like wallaby, for which the 1934 season was closed, and by which the majority of Thylacines were obtained (Haygarth, 2017a).

[145] Paddle (2000) cites three testimonies recalling Churchill's capture. The authors have recovered two additional testimonies regarding its journey to Hobart - a somewhat garbled account by Jenkins (1981, Libraries Tasmania, NS 896/4) and Bond (QVMAG Thylacine reports [Bond], Libraries Tasmania: NS463-1-1).

[146] Illustrating the attention a Thylacine would have attracted during the 1920s and 1930s, Jordan (1987) stated: "*Many residents on the coast clearly remember the next Tiger from the Arthur River – it travelled from Takone (to) Wynyard in Mr Bill Bugg's passenger bus, it created tremendous interest, I was with it. Its passage to Wynyard was well known many days in advance and its passage was continually interrupted by sightseers and reached its destination much later than expected*". Wilfred Batty (Ryghe, 1990) stated: "*... there was motor cars coming from everywhere to look at this blessed tiger that I'd shot. Hundreds of them, well I don't say hundreds, but a mighty lot came*".

> *"Mr. A. L. Butler said the last tigers which he saw were one near the Iron Store on the old West Coast-Hobart track, and another at the northern end of Lake St. Clair. That, however, was about five years ago. Dr. J. Pearson said it had been reported a few months ago that a native tiger had been trapped at Tarraleah, but he could obtain no definite information on the matter."*

It is abundantly clear that Pearson had no knowledge of a capture the previous year. With numerous statements and a request for material attributable to him, it cannot be plausibly argued that Pearson had no interest in Tasmanian fauna in general, and with his offer of £50[147] for a specimen, in the Thylacine in particular[148]. Yet, in order to preserve the level of ignorance demonstrated at the meeting of the 9th February 1937, Paddle & Medlock's scenario requires Pearson, a zoologist in post at TMAG since the 23rd February 1934[149], to have neglected to visit the Beaumaris Zoo to view its Thylacine, which he would have known was the world's only captive specimen[150], until after the alleged death of the male in mid-May 1936. Pearson had a special interest in the female urogenital tract of marsupials (*Advocate*, 24/6/1952, p.11), so had he visited the zoo[151] within his first 809 days[152] in Tasmania, he could not have failed to note the sex of the lone male specimen on display. Consequently, on receipt of a female body in September, it would have been immediately apparent to him that a recent substitution had been made using a recently caught wild specimen and he would have been duty bound to have informed his fellow board members of this capture, yet this was not the case. Further, it cannot be plausibly argued that the Fauna Board, whose agents included every police officer in the State, would not have been aware of a Thylacine publicly transported by train between Fitzgerald and Hobart and which had attracted sightseers along its route.

4. Pearson and De Bavay (1953)

In 1953, Pearson and De Bavay published a pivotal paper on the urogenital systems of the Dasyurinae and Thylacininae. Pearson states with reference to the Thylacine, that "*a specimen has not been captured for 25 years*". Whilst this statement would tentatively date the capture to around 1928, two years short of the arrival of the Delphin male in October 1930 and eight years short of the arrival of the alleged Churchill female in May 1936, it places the last capture prior to his arrival in Tasmania in 1934. With reference to the time he had been Director of the museum Pearson notes:

> *"Perhaps a dozen such reports have been received at the Tasmanian Museum in the last twenty years, many of them being most unreliable".*

His comments are therefore clearly incompatible with Paddle & Medlock's argument that a specimen arrived in 1936. Given Pearson's interest in the female urogenital tract he would have undoubtedly recalled the arrival of a mature female Thylacine at the museum, yet he makes no reference to this event in his paper, instead he states of the specimens he dissected that:

> *"The present account loses much of its value since it is based upon the examination of immature specimens, one a fairly advanced pouch young, No. 199, having a dorsal contour length (head and body without a tail) of 31·2 cm. This specimen was kindly lent by the authorities of the Australian Museum, Sydney. Another specimen, a pouch young, No. 292, having a D.C.L. of 13·1 cm. (head and body, minus tail) was placed at our disposal through the kindness of the authorities of the National Museum, Melbourne".*

Noting his frustration at the lack of material available from the species, Pearson states:

> *"...it is amazing to contemplate that no Australian zoologists took advantage of the presence of this rare form to make a serious study of its anatomy while specimens were readily procurable",* and *"…no knowledge whatsoever of the condition of the urogenital system in mature specimens of this rare form has been made known to the world".*

Consequently, if the body of a female had arrived at TMAG, he would have unquestionably made every effort to preserve its urogenital tract for his research. The fact that Pearson had to travel to the UK in 1955 to dissect the urogenital tract of a specimen in the collection of the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH 5292), the label of which bears the inscription "ONLY SPEC. IN EXISTENCE" (ITSD, 2017), confirms that he never had access to such a specimen in Tasmania in 1936.

5. The HCCRC Minutes

Whilst the authors do not dispute the appropriateness of their approach, it cannot be denied that Paddle & Medlock's identification of A1546 and A1283 was made via a process of elimination, which by its nature is unable to provide any information linking the specimens to Beaumaris, or for that matter to 1936. Consequently, additional evidence would be required to support any such association. In their attempt to establish this, Paddle & Medlock-argue that a payment for the alleged female is identifiable in the HCCRC minutes:

> *"On the thylacine's arrival Alison, lacking petty cash to*

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[147] A figure equivalent to 61% of the amount spent by the HCCRC on animals between May 1934 & November 1937.

[148] In June 1936, Pearson was quoted as stating of the species that: "*...from a geological point of view the Tasmanian tiger was one of the most valuable animals in the world*" (*The Mercury*, 3/6/1936, p.2).

[149] *Examiner*, 22/2/1934, p.6.

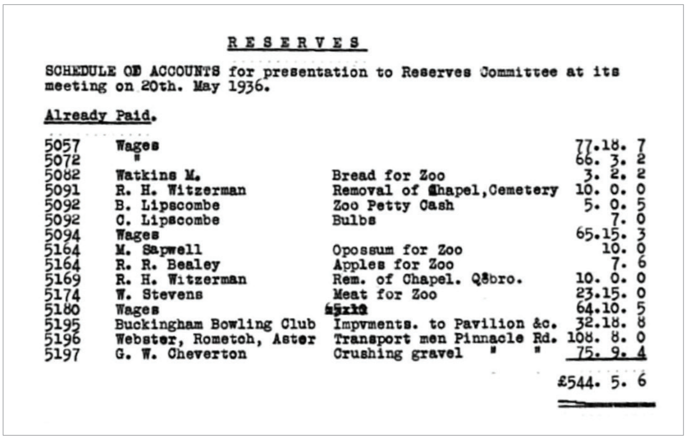
[150] *The Advocate* 4/7/1934, p.7, record this was stated at a meeting of the fauna Board at which Pearson is recorded as having been present.

[151] A distance of ≈1.4 km from the museum.

[152] The time between Pearson's arrival in Tasmania and the earliest date estimated by Paddle & Medlock (2023) for the death of the Delphin male.

> *purchase the specimen herself, contacted Lipscombe, who arrived at the zoo, and after some hard-bargaining, paid £5 out of his own pocket for the specimen, and then wrote a cheque to himself from the Reserves Committee account for £5/0/5, (the extra five pence as recompense for the bank's charge for the cashing of a cheque). The transaction was recorded as an "Already Paid" account tabled at the Reserves Committee meeting of 20th May 1936".*

This statement provides a detailed account of the events of the alleged purchase. However, no testimony has been recovered from Churchill regarding such events[153]. In addition, testimony from Bruce Lipscombe is entirely absent, and the HCCRC minutes of the 20th May 1936 contain no reference to the purported events[154]. The sole remaining potential source, Alison Reid died in 1997; consequently, any information she provided must predate her demise and would have to have been known to Paddle (2000 & 2012) for between three and fifteen years whilst he advocated Sharland and Smith's 1933 arrival date for the last captive. The authors note that it would be all but impossible to confuse testimony from Reid which could have been applied to 1933, a time her father was in charge of the zoo and would have negotiated the purchase, for that which applied to 1936 when control had passed to Bruce Lipscombe for whom she held significant personal antipathy (Sargent & Mitchells 1996; Paddle 2000). Yet, the events described above cannot have dated to before Arthur Reid's death[155] in December 1935, and are undoubtedly specific to the purchase of a Thylacine. Therefore had Reid's testimony contained a clear contradiction to an arrival date of 1933, or any suggestion of the death of a Thylacine immediately prior to her vacating the zoo in 1936, Paddle (2000 & 2012) must have been aware of this during his detailed examination of the subject. As has been previously stated (see: Pricing) there is no reference to the discussion of a Thylacine purchase after the 21st July 1925, and the entirety of the information given in the HCCRC minutes regarding the payment to Lipscombe is displayed in figure 12. Consequently, despite the significance of this passage to Paddle & Medlock's position, the authors are unable to comment on, or evaluate it on its evidential basis, as they are unable to identify how such a detailed understanding of the purported events which transpired between Churchill, Reid and Lipscombe in 1936 were obtained.



R E S E R V E S

SCHEDULE OD ACCOUNTS for presentation to Reserves Committee at its meeting on 20th. May 1936.

Already Paid.

5057	Wages		77.18. 7
5072	"		66. 3. 2
5082	Watkins M.	Bread for Zoo	3. 2. 2
5091	R. H. Witzerman	Removal of Chapel,Cemetery	10. 0. 0
5092	B. Lipscombe	Zoo Petty Cash	5. 0. 5
5092	C. Lipscombe	Bulbs	7. 0
5094	Wages		65.15. 3
5164	M. Sapwell	Opossum for Zoo	10. 0
5164	R. R. Bealey	Apples for Zoo	7. 6
5169	R. H. Witzerman	Rem. of Chapel. Q8bro.	10. 0. 0
5174	W. Stevens	Meat for Zoo	23.15. 0
5180	Wages	[illegible]	64.10. 5
5195	Buckingham Bowling Club	Impvments. to Pavilion &c.	32.18. 8
5196	Webster, Rometch, Aster	Transport men Pinnacle Rd.	108. 8. 0
5197	G. W. Cheverton	Crushing gravel " "	75. 9. 4
			£544. 5. 6

Figure 12. The *"Already Paid"* section of the HCCRC minutes of the 20th May 1936 noting Lipscombe's Petty Cash payment.

Fortunately, after the reformation of the HCCRC in May 1934 every payment was strictly itemised and the entry to Lipscombe for £ 5/-/5 on the 20th May 1936 is unambiguously listed as being for *"Petty Cash"*. It can also be established that no Thylacine purchase is likely to have been discussed at the meeting, and such an explanation would have been required from Lipscombe should he have been writing himself cheques from the municipal purse. The attendance record also notes that Alderman Rennie was present at that meeting, who 295 days later, stated that the animal which died during September 1936 had been present at the zoo for ten years[156].

Paddle & Medlock cite the payment of the 20th May 1936 in isolation. It should however, be considered in the context of 14 similar payments made between the reformation of the HCCRC in 1934[157] and the closure of the zoo in November 1937. One payment was listed only as *"Petty Cash"*, and all but three of the remaining payments listed as *"Zoo Sundries"*, *"Petty Expenses Zoo"* and *"Petty Cash, Zoo"*, were recorded as *"Zoo, Petty Cash"*. On each occasion these payments were assigned to the administrator; nine to Reid[158] and five to Lipscombe[159], which included the payment of the 20th May. As routine internal business all of these payments were recorded under the '*Already Paid*' section of the HCCRC minutes[160] and were not referred to in the meeting's minutes. In context, the payment of the 20th May 1936 falls within the range of the remaining 13 payments, at only £-/1/9 (1.5%) greater than another

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[153] Including the interview Bailey (2013) claimed to have carried out in 1969.

[154] The minutes contain five references to Beaumaris: a discussion of the disposal of the larger Eutherian carnivores, an ingrowing claw on the tigress (*Panthera tigris*), the visit of a Japanese dignitary, and two items relating to exchanges with Melbourne Zoo.

[155] The authors do not agree that Lipscombe would have attended the zoo to make a purchase in the manor proposed, Lipscombe was not appointed as Beaumaris' administrator until early 1936 after the death of Arthur Reid who is noticeably absent in the account.

[156] It could be argued Rennie had motive to be selective in his memory; however, this is dismissed in context. His remarks were made in response to a statement by Alderman S. Crisp, among the zoo's most long standing and vociferous critics, from within the faction of the council which had campaigned for the zoo's closure since at least 1933, and who would have been delighted to contradict him.

[157] The HCCRC was disbanded in 1932, but was reformed in 1934.

[158] 13/7/1934, £3/8/1, Petty Cash, Zoo; 11/7/1934, £3/18/11, Petty Cash, Zoo; 8/8/1934, £3/14/5, Petty Cash, Zoo; 19/9/1934, £2/3/10, Zoo Sundries; 13/2/1935, £5/2/9, Petty Cash, Zoo; 10/4/1935, £3/4/11, Petty Expenses, Zoo; 19/6/1935, £3/7/5, Petty Cash, Zoo; 3/7/1935, £3/3/-, Petty Cash, Zoo; 8/10/1935, £3/7/9, Zoo Sundries.

[159] 20/5/1936, £5/-/5, Zoo, Petty Cash; 8/7/1936, £4/-/-, Petty Cash; 18/11/1936, £4/18/10, Petty Cash, Beaumaris Zoo; 7/4/1937, £4/5/-, Petty Cash, Zoo; 14/7/1937, £2/10/4, Petty Cash, Zoo.

[160] This heading recorded payments made since the last meeting.

"*Petty Cash*" payment assigned to Lipscombe on the 18th November 1936 (£4/18/10) and £-/2/4 (3.6%) less than a payment assigned under the same title to Reid on the 13th February 1935 (£5/2/9). There is no evidence within the minutes of animals being purchased under "*Petty Cash*" or similar title after 1934[161]. Had a payment been made to reimburse Lipscombe for an impromptu Thylacine purchase in May 1936, there is a clear precedent that this would have been documented. On two occasions the administrators did purchase live animals for which they were reimbursed. As all payments made by the HCCRC after 1934 were strictly itemised, these transactions are clearly documented within the minutes and the animals purchased are specified. On the 12th December 1934, Reid is recorded as being reimbursed £5/1/- for "*Beaumaris Zoo, Calves etc.*". Lipscombe received £3 for "*Birds*" on the 7th April 1937, in addition to being assigned a second separate payment of £4/5/- listed as "*Petty Cash, Zoo*". Between the 13th June 1934 and the 1st September 1937, animal purchases were recorded in the payment lists of 19[162] meetings, in each instance to named individuals. In the case of mammals, the purchases were further identified by species, whereas birds or reptiles were identified by general type. With no plausible motive to obfuscate any such payment, and evidence that the HCCRC did not act in such a manner even when such a motive had existed, the authors argue that the absence of a specified species, or type, confirms that the payment of 20th May 1936 was not made in connection with an animal purchase.

The authors maintain that an overview of the HCCRC minutes provides a more plausible explanation for the payment of the 20th May 1936. Illustrating the need for Beaumaris to operate a petty cash float, a report by Reid (HCCRC: 12/7/1935) covering 1934-1935 noted expenses under the following categories: Supplies: Animals, £12/13/3; Material, £31/12/7; Insurance, £5/11/4; Printing, Stationary & Advertising, £6/13/1; Telephone, £9/17/8; Lighting, £1/11/9; Rates, £4/13/8 & Sundries, £4/8/10. None of these categories is easily identifiable as being paid specifically on behalf of the zoo within the HCCRC's fortnightly account listings. However, the total of £77/2/2 significantly exceeded the £23/-/3 paid to Reid for "*Petty Cash*" or "*Zoo Sundries*" during the same period. Whilst the bulk of these expenses were inevitably met by the HCCRC whilst in session, and possibly other departments such as the council's Advertising Committee, the more immediate of these expenses would necessarily have needed to have been met by the zoo itself. 1934-1935 is the only period where such a detailed itemisation of the zoo's finances is available, however, examination of payments over the ensuing two years suggests that no significant alterations were made to the HCCRC's methods of payment. Consequently, the authors could find no evidence to support the suggestion that along with the remaining Petty Cash entries, the payment of the 20th May 1936 was made for anything other than to meet incidental expenses accrued by the zoo.

6. Purchase Price

Paddle & Medlock (2023) state: "*At the time £5 was a relatively modest price for an adult thylacine*". To reiterate how "*modest*", it represents a 50% decrease from the sum paid during August 1924 for a maternally dependent cub[163], an 80% decrease from the sum paid for an adult between June 1923 and October 1930, an 84% - 88% decrease from the prices offered by the HCCRC in September 1936 and March 1937, and a 90% decrease from the figure offered by Pearson in March 1937. Suggesting that the proposed payment represents only a 37.5% reduction from the previous purchase Paddle & Medlock state:

> "*The penultimate thylacine was purchased as a juvenile in 1931 for £8 [Reserves Committee, minutes 3/8/1931]*".

However, this specific reference appears to apply to the Kaine purchase, now retracted in this paper by Sleightholme *et al.* (2020) because of its aberrant purchase price, and confirmed by the exclusion of this specimen by the recovery of the Stewart film. Paddle & Medlock then propose two additional factors for the reduction in price:

> "*Prior to the depression, the most expensive animals purchased by the zoo, by some considerable extent, were thylacines. The purchase price for adult thylacines was nominally set at £15 by the Reserves Committee on 19th June 1923 (five times higher than the second most expensive animals, deer). However, captors of lone adult*

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[161] On the 12/7/1935, a report by Arthur Reid on the zoo's finances between 1934 and 1935 allows the structure of spending on Beaumaris' animal acquisitions during this period to be examined. The "*Purchase of Animals*" is listed in this report as totalling £37/12/4, whilst named animal purchases recorded in the fortnightly spending summaries total only £21/4/4, leaving an apparent deficit of £16/8/-. However, this is the exact figure given for the period's "*Sale of Animals*". The authors suggest that this is explainable as these "*Sales*" were most likely exchanges rather than cash transactions. To illustrate the importance of animal exchanges to Reid's curatorship, on the 29/10/1929 (HCCRC) he stated: "*I am strongly of the opinion that it is necessary to procure a continuous supply of imported animals or birds, which can be done very cheaply by exchanging our common varieties for attractive importations. Perhaps it would be as well to state here that, with the exception of the Lioness and Twenty Indian monkeys, all the other foreign animals and birds have been secured in that way*". Whether by error or design, Reid's purchase total of £37/12/4 represents the perceived value of the stock acquired during the period, comprised of the amount spent on indigenous species and the value for which they exchanged for foreign species. A remarkable coincidence would be required for this interpretation to be incorrect. There is no evidence that during 1934-1935 any indigenous animal acquisitions were made outside of those assigned to named individuals and none to suggest an alteration in the HCCRC's spending pattern on their acquisition after that date.

[162] Animals recorded under "*Already Paid*" expressed as the total value of payments: £1/5/-, 13/6/1934; £1/9/-, 11/7/1934; £2, 22/8/1934; £14/13/1, 31/7/1935; £1/5/-, 18/11/1936; £8/15/-, 9/12/1936; £-/10/-, 20/1/1937; £3, 7/4/1937. Animals recorded under "*Proposed to be Paid*" expressed as the total value of payments: £-/10/-, 10/11/1934; £4/5/-, 13/2/1935; £1/5/-, 8/5/1935; £3, 14/8/1935; £3/15/-, 22/1/1936; £1, 11/3/1936; £3, 24/7/1936; £10/5/-, 22/7/1936; £10/17/6, 19/8/1936; £2/18/4, 3/11/1936; £8, 1/9/1937.

[163] *The Mercury* (p.7) and *Examiner* (p.4) of the 5/8/1924 describes the HCCRC attempting to purchase a Thylacine with "*two young in the pouch*". The *Examiner* states the figure offered was £26; however, the HCCRC (19/8/1924) records that the purchase was made for £46.

> *thylacines often received £20 or £25. But, given the depth of the depression, coupled with the captor's desire to avoid publicity (over a breach of the current game laws), the legal inability to sell the partially protected species elsewhere (either interstate or overseas), and, potentially, the condition of the specimen itself (now known to be an elderly female), Lipscombe's offer to purchase the thylacine for one-third of its pre-depression value was accepted".*

It is over-simplistic to state that prices fell in unison during the economic turmoil of the 1930s, and the evidence confirms that in the case of the Thylacine, they actually increased. The only discrepancies noted between the HCCRC price list of 1923 and the transactions recorded in the HCCRC minutes up to and during 1936, is that the Thylacine was the only species consistently purchased for 20 - 40% above guide price, and that after 1934 a 16%[164] decrease is noted in the purchase price for Tasmanian devils (*Sarcophilus harrisii*), the remainder of prices for other species remaining static. Further, no profound economic revival had occurred within Tasmania during the four months between Lipscombe's alleged £5/-/5 payment to Churchill and his offer to purchase a replacement Thylacine for £30. As to the specimen's condition providing a reason for the price reduction. With no supporting evidence within the HCCRC that any purchase took place, reliance on the age of the specimen to support a lower price creates a circular argument, as the association between specimens A1283 and A1546 with the zoo is entirely dependent on the validity of the payment. It should be noted that condition alone would still fail to explain the stated reduction in price. In 1923 Churchill received £25 for an injured male[165] and in 1924 Walter Mullins received £25 for a three legged female. Churchill's Thylacine had been purchased for £25, yet was kept off display for at least 38 days[166] due to "*…the soreness of its legs through being snared*". Whilst Loveluck's Thylacine arrived at the zoo during the first week of July 1923, but was not paid for until after the 11th September[167], indicating that in the case of Thylacine purchases the HCCRC's approach was to postpone payment in the case of a questionable specimen. The actions of the council are also inconsistent with a brief acquisition of a Thylacine in 1936. If, after some "*hard bargaining*" Lipscombe had obtained a specimen for £5 between the 22nd April[168] and 20th May, an explanation is required for the sudden 500% increase in his valuation four months later to £30, and his subsequent 700% increase to £40 in March 1937. *The Mercury* of the 9th March 1937 (p.2) stated:

> *"After considerable opposition to the proposal had been expressed, the Hobart City Council last night adopted a recommendation by the Reserves Committee that £40 should be offered for a Tasmanian tiger (or marsupial wolf) for Beaumaris Zoo".*

To contextualise the sum, £40 was 49% of the total expenditure listed for animal purchases (£81/2/11) within the payment lists between the reformation of the HCCRC in May 1934 and the zoo's closure in November 1937. Consequently, it is small wonder this sum elicited "*considerable opposition*" at a council meeting of the 8th March 1937, especially if the alleged 1936 Churchill specimen survived for only four months. Yet, there is no record of a single voice having raised this objection, nor to question the reason for the 500 - 700% price increase over the previous nine months, despite the attendance of at least three members of the HCCRC (Aldermen Lord, Rennie and Shoobridge) who were also present at the HCCRC meeting of the 20th May 1936 during which Paddle & Medlock propose the Thylacine purchase was recorded. It cannot be reasonably argued that this represented a reluctance to speak out on the part of the Aldermen whose published objections included the sale of a leopard to a circus for £10, that the zoo was a "*gaol for animals*", that the previous Thylacine had "*fretted itself to death*", that its term of captivity represented "*10 years of cruelty to a dumb animal*", and that "*the man who put it in the cage should have been there himself*", nor on the part of *The Mercury*, who had eagerly reported these comments and other attacks on the zoo since the early 1930s.

7. The disposal of the penultimate male and the employment of sustenance workers

Referring to the body of their penultimate male Paddle & Medlock (2023) state:

> *"…detailed examination of the zoo archives has determined that the body of this particular thylacine upon its death was destroyed at the zoo".*

The HCCRC minutes contain no reference to the fate of the body of a Thylacine between the 14th April 1930 and the 16th September 1936. In the context of the value of such specimens at that time and the legislation that had been passed to aid in their procurement (see: Contextualising the death of the last captive), the authors assert that definitive evidence is required to substantiate this claim.-Paddle & Medlock continue:

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[164] From the 13/6/1934, a reduction of £-/5/- is noted in the price paid for Tasmanian devils from the price of £1/10/- listed in the specimen price guide attached to the HCCRC minutes of the 19/6/1923.

[165] Sharland (*The Mercury*, 20/6/1925, p.5) reported that: "*Within the last few weeks there has been added to the Beaumaris Zoo a specimen of that rare animal, the Tasmanian tiger, which was captured in a snare in the country near Tyenna. Its paws have been somewhat injured, and for that reason it has not been on public view, but its condition is rapidly improving*". This article can only refer to the Churchill/O'May specimen.

[166] *The Mercury*, 20/6/1923, p.5 & 7/7/1923, p.6.

[167] The payment is recorded under the "*Proposed to be Paid*" section of the HCCRC minutes of the 11/9/1923.

[168] The date of the previous HCCRC meeting after which the payment was listed as "*Already Paid*" on the 20th May.

> *"When it was found by sustenance workers, the body was simply removed from the cage and placed with the refuse that was daily collected from the zoo (Reserves Committee, minutes 20/7/1931)."*

The sole point referenceable to a primary source in this statement is that refuse collections increased in regularity during 1931, which clearly has no bearing on events during 1936, and Paddle (2000, 2012) makes no reference to any corresponding testimony of Alison Reid which may support this position[169], despite it having a direct bearing on the date of the last captive's entry dealt with in Paddle (2000) and the number of specimens held during the 1930s addressed in Paddle (2012). The authors argue that an unevidenced reference to anonymous sustenance workers, whose actions can neither be supported nor contradicted, falls far short of the necessary standard of evidence. The number of sustenance workers engaged at the Domain and the roles they carried out is unclear. Whilst Paddle (2000) references statements by Alison Reid discussing the presence of multiple sustenance workers, after examining the HCCRC minutes for the entirety of the zoo's operation the authors uncovered no evidence that any were engaged in animal care. The sole reference within the HCCRC minutes (29/10/1935) to the use of sustenance workers at Beaumaris refers to a single individual carrying out ground work[170].

8. Laird's Comments

Paddle & Medlock (2023) cite the comments of photographer and conservationist Norman Laird to corroborate the death of what they consider to have been the penultimate specimen. Laird's statement is recorded in a type written note[171] attached to a newspaper article from the *Australasian Post* of the 16th August 1956 and contain a copy of the Sheppard photograph (HBZ 1) [Fig. 17]:

> *"The photograph in this item was taken by, and is the copyright of Ben Shepherd* (sic), *photographer, of Sandy Bay, Hobart. The negative is a glass ½ plate, with much knife work on it to reduce contrast and background. A print was purchased by me for 3.0.0, and permission was given to use it in a book publication. The animal died the day after it was photographed, and it does not represent the species in good condition, in fact, the subject of the photograph is emaciated"* (Libraries Tasmania, NS1143).

No connection can be established between Laird and Beaumaris Zoo. Further, it is unlikely he would have known the exact date of Sheppard's photograph or the date of death of the Thylacine depicted in it, so he cannot be reasonably considered to be the comment's originator, leaving him as a secondary source with no evident support.

Whilst Laird's description of the original negative, actually a 5" x 4" glass plate (Black & Linnard, 2023) containing no knife work is inaccurate, his statement appears to imply he had met Sheppard. This raises the possibility that the latter may have been the source of the information, though this supposition cannot be confirmed.

Sheppard appears in the HCCRC minutes on the 19th August 1936 listed as receiving £1 for "*photographs*", but no further connection with the zoo is apparent. Laird's comments must necessarily date between the publication of the *Australasian Post* article on the 16th August 1956[172] and his death on the 21st June 1978. During this time, no source correctly dated the last captive Thylacines death, which was widely believed to have occurred in 1933. Sheppard's archives[173] contain a written record that his image was captured in May 1936, directly contradicting this prevailing belief. That there is no evidence of the correct date of death until Smith (1981) suggests that Sheppard did not supply researchers with authoritative information regarding the fate of Beaumaris' Thylacines during 1936.

Establishing a dubious precedent for Laird's testimony, even within the many competing unsupported sources (see: Dating conundrums), he has proven to be amongst the most unreliable. Paddle (2008) notes that he was responsible for two significantly misleading pieces of information. Laird stated that the Burrell photographs (MRB 24-28)[174] were obtained using a mounted specimen. In reality, the photographs portray a living animal at the Beaumaris Zoo's original Battery Point location taken in August 1911 (Paddle, 2008). Laird also claimed that 3,482 Thylacine skins were exported to London by a single tannery to be made into waistcoats. However, this is over 1,000 skins more than Guiler's 1958 estimate of the number of animals taken during the entire government bounty scheme between 1888 and 1909. Each of these errors demonstrates a lack of critical evaluation on Laird's part, and his willingness to base his conclusions on tenuous evidence. Laird's statement is unsupported and is as equally contradicted as any other alternate death dates given for the last captive Thylacine over the years. To accept it with no further evidence would require the equal acceptance of a death in 1933 to accommodate comments made by Chisholm in 1945, Sharland in 1962, as well as the statement attributed Fleay in 1950, a further death in 1934 to accommodate Fleay's comments in 1940, and a death in 1935 to accommodate Sharland's 1939 statement. A failure to give these statements equal consideration would represent an arbitrary and subjective decision.

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[169] No testimony from Bruce Lipscombe has been recovered.

[170] "He [Arthur Reid] *stated in reply to a question that as a dole man was doing most of the gardening work, he had been able by a re-arrangement of other employee's duties to obviate the need of employing Newman*" (Letter from W. Brain [Town Clerk] 29/10/1935 to the HCCRC, attached to the minutes of the 30/10/1935).

[171] This comment was previously addressed by Paddle (2012) when he assigned it, and the Sheppard image, to a male specimen allegedly purchased for £12 from a T. Hunt. However, subsequent research by Black & Linnard (2023) uncovered Sheppard's workbooks for 1936 which dated the image to May 1936.

[172] The original copy of Laird's note is held by Libraries Tasmania. However, no date is supplied beyond that given by the *Australasian Post* article to which it is attached (16/8/1956), suggesting that the earliest origin may be 21 years after the events described.

[173] Libraries Tasmania Ref: NS1298-1-1880.

[174] Thylacine Image Registry identifier (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021a).

To conclude, the authors are unable to agree with Paddle & Medlock's interpretation that Cunningham's report provides evidence for the receipt by TMAG of a single Thylacine specimen during 1936. Furthermore, they found no evidence to suggest any such specimen could be connected with the Beaumaris Zoo, or that could allow it be explained by a wild kill. In the former case, they consider the absence of evidence sufficiently significant to discount this possibility, and that the latter case is explicitly excluded by the statements of Dr. Pearson. No evidence is presented to support the death of the Delphin specimen in May 1936 beyond the single unsupported source of Norman Laird. Lastly, The alleged captor, Elias Churchill, whose whereabouts in May 1936 can be confidently placed 144km to the north-east of the proposed events, twice unambiguously stated he had made a single live capture, which can be dated to 1923 by multiple sources of evidence (see: Smith, 1981 & Paddle, 2000). Consequently, the authors are unable to support Paddle & Medlock (2023) and confine further discussion to the Delphin specimen.

Capture Location

During his lifetime, Roy Delphin never publicly disclosed the location of his family's Thylacine captures believing the species still persisted in the wild and for fear that they would be disturbed. He revealed to Godfrey (1984) only that:

> *"It was caught on a 'treadle' snare on the West Coast in thick, overgrown country and brought back to Waratah carried in a chaff bag slung on a pole".*

However, immediately following the second capture an indication of their location was reported in the press[175]:

> *"Some time ago Messrs. Delphin Bros., when snaring captured a hyena in the vicinity of Mt. Bischoff. Last week they were successful in capturing a smaller specimen of the same species".*

The area in which the *Advocate* reported the first capture was repeated by Dorothy Delphin who told her daughter that it had occurred: "*…near Mt. Bischoff*". Both of the Delphins' Thylacines were acquired as an unexpected bycatch from wallaby snaring. Prior to the capture of their first Thylacine it would have been unnecessary, as well as being practically impossible to keep their trapping area hidden from their friends and neighbours, many of whom were engaged in the same activity. Any attempt at secrecy would have been easily compromised in a town the size of Waratah (population: 1,180)[176] and the adjacent township of Magnet (population: 300)[177] where Dan Delphin had been the licensee of the local hotel until May 1930. As Nic Haygarth (pers. com., 25/5/2022) states: "*…every man and his dog would have known where their snaring country was*". Roy recalled that news of a Thylacine capture travelled fast:

> *"We never said a word to anyone and the only possible clue was that I bought a big collar and chain…. Just the same, the yard was full of kids in no time and they all wanted to see the tiger"* (Godfrey, 1984).

The Queen Victoria Museum (Launceston) retains notes on interviews conducted in 1972[178] relating to three accounts of Thylacines captured in the area around Waratah, all of which provide specific locations for the Delphins' captures. As may be expected after 42 years, details are sparse, and one of the accounts partially contradicts the preceding two:

> 1) *"Joe Fagan of Waratah Hotel: Gordon & Ray Delphin caught 2 on Pennys Flats in 1930. Jones Creek (near 19 Mile Creek or Hazelwood Track old prospectors said saw tigers. Bas Murray one of the best snarers in country (so good he once snared Bass Straight) in 1923 caught one out towards Bluff from Guildford. Cutter (Arthur) Murray caught one on Parrawee side of Goodrich in 1928 full grown - had it in box at Parrawee. 1929 Joe Fagan was snaring with Arthur Murray and he caught one on Parrawee side of Goodrich Plain, very young one - strong springers round waist was dead - had skin for long time. Clem Penney caught one in necker snare in 1926 - Pennys Flats".*

> **2)** Fagan's testimony is corroborated by another Waratah resident and experienced bushman, Arthur 'Cutter' Murray, who provided Beaumaris with a juvenile female in 1925[179]:

> *"Treadle Parrawee 1923 sold Hobart for £30 caught one ¾ grown Goodrich Plain in Surrey Hills 1925 little one caught …[?] Clem Penny caught one on Penny's Plains 1920. Delfin* (sic) *caught 2 Penny flat 1930 main food badger*[180] *garrentee* (sic) *that. 1000 devils [?] 1968. 2 weeks very tame tho* (sic) *warm liver catch it like a dog. Eat after a day or so. Cough at night never snapped never barked walk or bark occasionally dog gr… [?] or bark".*

> **3)** A third series of accounts is attributed to a W. Rainbird[181]:

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[175] *Advocate*, 11/8/1930, p.6.

[176] *Advocate*, 8/11/1920, p.12.

[177] *Advocate*, 27/4/1932, p.2.

[178] Haygarth, pers. com., 4/6/2022.

[179] HCCRC: 20/7/1925.

[180] Badger - local name for wombat (*Vombatus ursinus*).

[181] William Rainbird (*Advocate*, 12/12/1942, p.2).

> *"1916 saw a bitch & 4 pups near Balfour dog killed one - cat size".*
>
> *"Believes Burt McMahon in Eltham House (Hbt) has a king. Has film of Tiger".*
>
> *"Cutting from Burnie Advocate outlines the various captures of 'Tigers around 30's. 2 caught on the Arthur Flats behind Mt. Bischoff in 1930 by the Delphin Brothers. Another one caught in the same area and year by Mr Clem Penny. In about 1930, 1 caught at top of Hellyer Gorge by Arthur Chopper Murray. Arthur Murray also caught one on Goodridge Plain in about 1930 (now owned by Associated Forest Holdings)".*
>
> *"Dan Delphin caught two Northern end of Magnet Creek. About 1931 caught two full grown 'Tigers'. Kept them for some time in a stable Waratah. Think it went to Hobart, was at Burnie exhibit new year one pup dead".*

Evaluation of these testimonies is to some degree confined by the rough form in which they were recorded. Further, all three accounts contain definite errors. Account 1 and part of Account 3 give the captors of the Delphin Thylacines as being "*Gordon and Ray* (sic)" and the "*Delphin Brothers*"[182]. Whilst Roy was present for both captures, he was accompanied by his uncle Dan during the first and his brother Gordon during the second. Dan Delphin died in 1934, followed by Gordon in 1967 and Roy in 1989. Consequently, the authors contend that by 1972 the captures became more closely associated with the two brothers who had survived and interacted with the witnesses for at least four decades after the death of Dan Delphin.

Accounts 1 & 2 incorrectly date Clem Penney's kill to 1926 and 1920 respectively, whilst, as noted in the *Weekly Courier*, it actually occurred on the 1st January 1924[183]. Account 3 appears to infer that Roy and Gordon's captures were made separately to a further two by their uncle Dan, citing the latter as the captor of two adult Thylacines, though it immediately contradicts this statement by correctly noting that one of the "*pups*" had died. The final paragraph states that either the animals were shown at Burnie around New Year, or that the "*pup*" had died around this time. Whilst it is not possible to determine which statement was intended due to the lack of punctuation, neither can be correct. The captures occurred in July and August 1930 and the sole survivor of the two Thylacines had been sold to Beaumaris by the 17th October 1930 (see: Captive Chronology – 1930).

Accounts 1 & 2

There is significant agreement between Fagan and Murray. Each located the captures at Penney's[184] Flats and correctly date them to 1930[185]. Both Fagan and Murray were lifelong residents of Waratah and experienced bushmen with an extensive knowledge of the surrounding country. The relationship between them is well established. Murray was employed by Fagan (Haygarth, 2018) and in the testimony attributed to him Fagan recalls snaring with Murray:

> *"1929 Joe Fagan was snaring with Arthur Murray and he caught one on Parrawee side of Goodrich Plain, very young one – strong springers round waist was dead – had skin for long time".*

Whilst Murray is best remembered for supplying a juvenile female to Beaumaris in 1925, he corroborated Fagan's reference to him having made an inadvertent kill to McNamara (1983): "*...once I came across a little fellow dead in a wallaby snare*".

Fagan owned both of Waratah's public houses, the Waratah Hotel, destroyed by fire during the 1950s, and the Bischoff Hotel, where Murray was a regular patron. After interviewing Murray, McNamara reported:

> *"On a Saturday afternoon he sometimes goes to the Bischoff Hotel. He has a few beers, and talks to some old friends, and wonders where the world is going".*

In light of their established connection, the authors acknowledge that the similarity between Fagan and Murray's testimonies could be the result of them having influenced each other. However, mitigating this possibility, both men can also be connected to the Delphin brothers, who had also frequently patronised the Bischoff Hotel since at least 1937. Enkler (pers. com., 29/7/2022) notes:

> *"...both my Uncles (actually all the family did) frequented the Bischoff Hotel. Uncle Gordon got his nickname at the pub. At the hotel someone yelled out asking what's your name someone else replied 'Julie' and it stuck… which I believe was around the time of the plane crash*[186]*. In the front bar there is a fire place with a wooden mantel which patrons have carved their names on including 'Julie'. Now my Uncle's did not read or write so not sure who carved it there but my Uncle Gordon loved showing me in 1967. So yes, they spent a bit of time at the Bischoff Hotel, especially as it was close by to Hall St. The propeller at the Bischoff hotel hang* (sic) *over a doorway near the stair case and has a picture imbedded in it of Uncle Gordon with the propeller he found".*

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[182] Whilst the *Advocate* of 11/8/1930 (p.6) makes the same error, the authors do not consider it likely that the 42 year old article influenced either men in 1972.

[183] *Weekly Courier,* 17/1/1924, p.46.

[184] Penney's - correct spelling.

[185] Confusion surrounding the year of capture even existed amongst the Delphin family who stated that they had occurred in 1933 (Linnard *et al.,* 2020). As it is unlikely that the Delphins independently arrived at the same erroneous date as Sharland, their belief that the captures were made in 1933 is likely to be traceable to the proliferation of his error.

[186] *Advocate*, 8/2/1937, p.7.

Gordon remained at Hall Street until his death in 1967[187]. Roy briefly lived in Melbourne during the 1960s, but had returned to Tasmania by 1967 and was living in Devonport. Consequently, this time frame provides Fagan and Murray with at least 37 years to interact with one or both of the Delphin brothers following their captures. When asked whether she recalled if her uncles had ever referred to either Fagan or Murray, Enkler (pers. com. 1/7/2022) stated: "*Yes, I remember the name Joe Fagan. Certainly remember my mum mentioning him. Have no recognition about the Murrays sorry*". Despite having no direct recollection of the name Murray, Enkler also stated: "*I remember my Uncle's talking about other men who caught or hunted Tigers. Though I can't recall names they mentioned*".

Whilst acknowledging the limitations presented by the structure of the interview notes, the authors suggest they provide evidence that Murray recalled knowledge of the Delphins' treatment of their Thylacines. Though Murray's account of the Delphin capture is immediately proceeded by the seemingly unrelated statement: "*1000 devils [?] 1968*" the next sentence states: "*2 weeks very tame tho* (sic) *warm liver catch it like a dog. Eat after a day or so. Cough at night never snapped never barked walk or bark occasionally dog gr… [?] or bark*". Though disjointed, this statement is strongly reminiscent of a statement made by Roy Delphin:

> "*He tamed down a lot after a while. He'd growl and jump about but he never offered to bite. Mum used to feed him warm meat in a little billy can. He always liked his warm meat*" (Godfrey, 1984).

Fagan, Murray and the Delphin brothers lived in a small rural town, were all of a similar age[188], would have known each other at the time their captures were made, and afterwards regularly patronised the same public house over at least four decades. Their testimonies[189] are evidence that each man retained knowledge of, and interest in, the Thylacines encountered in the area, therefore, it is reasonable to assume that their previous captures would have been a popular topic of conversation. Consequently, in addition to their contemporary knowledge of events, it is argued that the evidence supports the likelihood that that in 1972 Fagan and Murray were also recalling information supplied or reiterated by Gordon and Roy Delphin.

Account 3

The accounts by Fagan and Murray are condensed into one paragraph, whereas the third is divided into four. Each of the accounts are preceded by the source's name. Consequently, the authors contend that all the statements made after the name W. Rainbird can be attributed to him. This is supported by the second brief paragraph stating: "*Believes Burt McMahon in Eltham House (Hbt) has a king*[190]*. Has film of Tiger*".

On the 22nd February 1950, the *Examiner* (p.3) stated:

> "*When Mr. Hallstrom senior*[191] *was in Hobart last year for a conference of State Animals and Birds Protection Boards, he promised to send Mr. Rainbird copies of the only known film of Tasmanian Tiger in captivity. It was taken a good many years ago when there was a Tasmanian tiger at Melbourne Zoo*[192]*. Mr. Rainbird has received copies of the film, which is of 16 millimetre size, and is willing to lend a copy to anyone interested*".

Rainbird appears to have been in possession of the cutting from the *Advocate* described in paragraph 3 of his statement. The authors assert that mention of the Arthur River Flats in the article is synonymous with Penney's Flats (see: Locating Penney's Flats). Unfortunately, all efforts to recover this article have been unsuccessful, so no details of the author or their sources is determinable. Consequently, whilst the article appears to substantiate the statements made by Fagan and Murray, it is not possible to confidently state that it is independent of them, as neither can be excluded as its source. Consistent with this stance, the authors also note that like accounts 1 & 2, the date is correctly given as 1930. Suggesting the author of the *Advocate* article consulted a separate source, the capture area is given as the "*Arthur River Flats*"[193], rather than the more specific "*Penney's Flats*" named in both men's direct testimonies. Murray's epithet is also described as "*Chopper*" rather than "*Cutter*", an error neither man would have been likely to make. However, both of these discrepancies could be accounted for by error or journalistic license. The substantive elements of Rainbird's fourth paragraph are strongly reminiscent of the Delphin captures (see: Captivity Chronology - 1930) and there can be no doubt that he had some knowledge of them. However, Rainbird attributes both captures to Dan Delphin. Given that the *Advocate* article also appears to have been provided by Rainbird, it suggests that he was treating them as separate captures to those made by Roy and Gordon. The error of omitting the brothers is potentially significant and suggests that he had no connection or contact with either of them. Dan, who died in 1934, is only known to have made one capture, a juvenile, and then in the company of Roy. Consequently, Rainbird's testimony in which he attributes Dan with two adult captures located at the "*Northern end of Magnet Creek*", approximately 4km north west of Waratah, is unlikely to be based on primary evidence. Supporting this conclusion; unlike Fagan and Murray, Rainbird was not a resident of Waratah, but of Launceston 132 km to the east, significantly distancing him from the events of 1930. The *Advocate* of 22/2/1950 (p.4) states:

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[187] After Gordon Delphin's death, the house was seized for rates arrears and demolished. Its precise location is now unknown.

[188] Roy and Gordon were born in 1911, Fagan in 1908 and Murray in 1898.

[189] In addition to the 1972 interview, Murray spoke of his Thylacine captures to the press on two subsequent occasions (*The Mercury* 1973, p.12 & McNamara, 6/12/1983, p.1). Gordon is not recorded as having spoken publicly, however, Roy gave two interviews during the 1980s (preserved as press cuttings by the Delphin family) and to Godfrey (1984).

[190] A likely reference to Herbert John King, the cinematographer responsible for Film 3 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021b).

[191] Sir Edward John Lees Hallstrom (1886-1970) benefactor of Taronga Park Zoo.

[192] No evidence has been recovered of the filming of a Thylacine at Melbourne. Consequently, this statement is almost certainly a journalistic error resulting from the mislocation of one of the Domain films.

[193] Of note is the non-specific nature of the term "*…the Arthur Flats behind Mt. Bischoff*". Waratah is to the immediate south-east of Mt. Bischoff, whilst '*behind*' may suggest that the area in question lay to the north, but this is not specified. For reference, the Arthur River flows along the western side of the mountain.

> *"Mr. W. C. Hallstrom*[194]*, Sydney, geologist, who visited Tasmania two years ago and searched unsuccessfully in known haunts of tigers, will probably be accompanied by Mr. W. Rainbird, of Launceston, on a trip to the Far North-West and West Coasts. They will search the area between Temma and Waratah in the region of the Interview, Pieman and Lagoon Rivers and Mt. Balfour".*

Accounts 1 & 2 are provided by identifiable sources with a demonstrable longstanding connection to the Delphins and to the area around Waratah. In Account 3, the information provided in the *Advocate* article appears to corroborate Accounts 1 & 2, but cannot be confirmed to be independent of the same sources. Significant errors are detectable in the fourth paragraph and the evidence suggests it was not based on primary evidence or provided by a source with an immediate connection to the area. Consequently, the authors do not consider the alternate location it provides persuasive and conclude that the evidence best supports Penney's Flats[195], the area identified by both Fagan and Murray, as the most likely capture location of the last captive Thylacine.

Locating Penney's Flats

Fagan states that the Delphin captures were made at Penney's Flats, the same location as a kill by another Waratah Resident, Clem Penney. That the Delphin captures and Penney kill occurred in the same location is also noted in the *Advocate* article provided by Rainbird. Murray gives the location of the Delphin captures as Penney's Flats, but states that Penney's kill occurred on Penney's Plains. The authors argue that the evidence confirms Penney's Flats and Plains are synonyms for a plot of land on the east bank of the Arthur River.

Arnold Penney (1981) provided a description of his brother Clem's kill:

> *"Early one morning as my brother, Clem was going to where they were working he saw two young tigers, about the size of an ordinary household cat. He immediately started towards them, hoping to catch at least one, but before he had moved very far the mother tiger pounced out of the scrub. Knowing she was attempting to save her babies by attacking him, my brother grabbed a stick that had been cut with a slack hook and hit her. She fell to the ground and did not move so Clem took after the young ones but the scrub was so thick he could travel only a short distance. Returning to where he had left the mother tiger he was surprised to find she was dead. Looking at the stick with which he had hit her he found there was a very sharp about 2 inches long sticking out and that sharp piece corresponded with a deep wound on the neck of the tiger. My brothers kept a sharp look out for the baby tigers but they were not seen near the camp again".*

Whilst disagreement exists as to the method of kill between the accounts provided by the *Weekly Courier*[196] and Arnold Penney, both of whom state the animal was bludgeoned to death, and Fagan's description of it being captured in a necker snare, the precise nature of the kill is secondary in determining its location. Fagan and Penney were both born around 1908 (Haygarth, 2018; Haygarth, pers. com., 25/5/2022) and would have attended school and grown up together in Waratah whose small population would have ensured they were closely acquainted. The authors argue that Fagan would have been well placed to be aware of the details of a kill or capture made by Penney, yet he only credits him with a single kill, as does his brother (Arnold), whose 1981 testimony was sourced from the entries of a newspaper competition requesting entrants to submit their recollections of the Thylacine. Aside from recounting his brother's experience, Arnold Penney only includes his personal recollection of finding a Thylacine print. Had his brother made any further kills or captures he would have been aware of them, so the absence of any mention in his recollection of events is all but conclusive. No recovered source credits Clem Penney with a second kill or capture, therefore, the authors argue that both Fagan and Murray must have been referring to the same event at the same location and that the discrepancy in name between Fagan and Murrays accounts results from either a local synonym or from an error in transcription. Whilst Arthur Penney's description of his brother's experience immediately follows his own recollection of journeys to the Arthur River: *"In 1921 I was a 12 year old boy, daily taking food down to the Arthur River where my two older brothers were scrubbing* [clearing] *my father's land*", he does not directly specify that his brother's kill was made on his father's property. However, Clem's father (Arthur Douglas Penney) was still in possession of the site in January 1924 when the kill was made and Arnold's statement that the young Thylacines: "*…were not seen near the camp again*" suggests that they had been encountered near to the "*camp*", which would logically be located on the Penney property. This conclusion is corroborated by the *Weekly Courier* (24/1/1924, p.46) which stated: *"On New Year's afternoon an athletic young bushman left Waratah to inspect a selection of his father's about nine miles down the Arthur River",* confirming that Penney was engaged on, or travelling to, his father's land at the time. In either event, the location of the kill has become associated with the Penney's plots, and that they were known locally as either Penney's 'Flats' or 'Plains', a conclusion expressed by both Fagan and Murray.

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[194] Son of Sir Edward John Lees Hallstrom.

[195] On the 26/2/2023, Dr. Nic Haygarth visited Penney's Flats, and noted that the area contained evidence of periodic use into the late 20th century (Haygarth, pers. com., 27/2/2023). Consequently, the authors argue that the area would still have been familiar and identifiable to Waratah's residents in 1974 when Fagan and Murray's testimony was recovered.

[196] *Weekly Courier* (24/1/1924, p.46) states: *"While walking round he heard a muffled bark, and turning quickly he found that two native tigers were advancing rapidly toward him. One was a large male and the other a rather small young female. As these animals are plentiful in this locality this bushman always carries an automatic pistol. Pulling this out he tried a shot at the leading animal, but the pistol would not go off. Throwing the useless weapon at the tigers he looked round, and fortunately saw a sturdy limb of a tree at his feet. Grasping this excellent club he stood on guard. The female tiger was in the lead and was crawling forward. When about 6ft away she sprang full at him. He met her fairly with a sweep of his heavy club, knocking her backwards on to the ground, and followed up with a killing assault on her neck. Straightening himself instantly, the bushman found the male in the air from a mighty leap. Again the trusty club proved true, and the tiger was knocked to the ground. Gathering himself up, the animal dashed into the scrub on three legs, a foreleg being apparently broken, whimpering like a wounded dog".*

Haygarth (pers. com., 25/5/2022) located Penney's Flats on a 1956 map of Russell County[197] which shows two 99 acre plots on the Arthur River flats immediately south of the entry point of a watercourse labelled Lynch's Creek [Fig. 13]. The lots are numbered 99-2-0 and 99-3-12, both of which are listed as having been acquired by A. D. Penney on the 10th April 1915 and as being forfeited due to lack of payment on the 26th April 1924 and the 5th August 1924 respectively[198]. The Russell County map is primarily concerned with property ownership and the course and scale of the Arthur River it charts bears little resemblance to a modern map or to the extent of the landscape it depicts. The single feature capable of locating Penney's Flats is a creek identified by its former local name (Lynch's Creek) which has long since fallen into disuse. Consequently, there is no means to identify the location based solely on the map. However, the site can be confidently positioned on the eastern bank of the Arthur River along a ≈6km course between the river's confluences with Deep Valley Creek and the Wandle River. The sole text capable of refining the location is the *Weekly Courier* reference to the site being "*…about nine miles down the Arthur River*". It is not specified whether this distance was from the town of Waratah itself or from the confluence of the Waratah and Arthur Rivers. However, measuring ≈9 miles (14.5km) along the course of the Arthur River from its confluence with the Waratah River arrives at a location ≈3 miles (5km) north of the Wandle River confluence and out of the range provided by the Russell County map. Measured from Waratah, ≈9 miles along the route from the town to the confluence of the Waratah and Arthur Rivers and along the course of the latter arrives at a point where an unidentified creek joins the river from a direction corresponding to that of Lynch's Creek on the Russell County Map. The authors contend that the evidence supports this location as the site of the 198 acre plot referred to as Penney's Flats.

Captivity Chronology (1930-1936)

Following its capture on Penney's Flats on the evening of the 7th July 1930, the term of captivity of the Delphin male can now be recounted in some detail.

1930

At the time of capture, the authors estimate that the Delphin juvenile would have been newly independent of its mother at approximately 18 months old. All the evidence suggests the Delphins treated their Thylacines compassionately with recollections amongst the family of them being fed milk by Dorothy, who celebrated her seventh birthday whilst they were in their care, and that Mary Delphin was in the habit of warming their meat. Dorothy recalled (Gould, 1995-2000) that on arrival at Waratah "*…the tigers were kept in an old pigeon loft with a fenced in part of the side*" [Fig. 14] where they were displayed to visitors and paying customers alike: *"One day most of the school children at Waratah came to see the tigers led by a school teacher Miss Brown. We were so poor we should have charged a penny"*. Dorothy also recollected that her brothers showed their Thylacines "*…around the West Coast of Tassy*". Unfortunately, little further detail survives, though Godfrey (1984) describes the entertainment that accompanied the display:

> *"Those who usually did the showing were his uncle Dan and sister Pearl with Charlie Fulford and his daughter. In the act around the showing, Charlie Fulford played a melodeon and the girls danced".*

Breaden (Wisbey, 1994) recalls seeing the Thylacines on show in a tent, indicating that they were being displayed away from the Delphin's home:

> *"I think it was while I was at Waratah this happened. There were two young men, Delphins their names were. I can't remember their Christian names. And they had caught these two, they weren't full-grown tigers. And they had them in a tent, I remember it vividly. With dog collars round their necks, and chains. And they spoke of taking them around the shows and showing them at the sideshows. But after that I can't remember what happened to them. I can remember seeing the two little tigers".*

Whilst there is no direct evidence to confirm a relationship between the two Delphin Thylacines and with neither animals' remains available for study, in light of the species' then rarity, and that both juveniles were retrieved from the same locality within 28-34 days of one another, the authors consider it likely that they were siblings, either recently independent of their mother or in the process of separation.

On the 20th September 1930, the Delphins placed the first of a series of advertisements in the *Advocate* for what

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[197] Russell County map: Ref: 1A, AF820-1-113, Libraries Tasmania.

[198] *Tasmanian Government Gazette*, 26/2/1924, p.531 & 5/8/1924, p.1640.

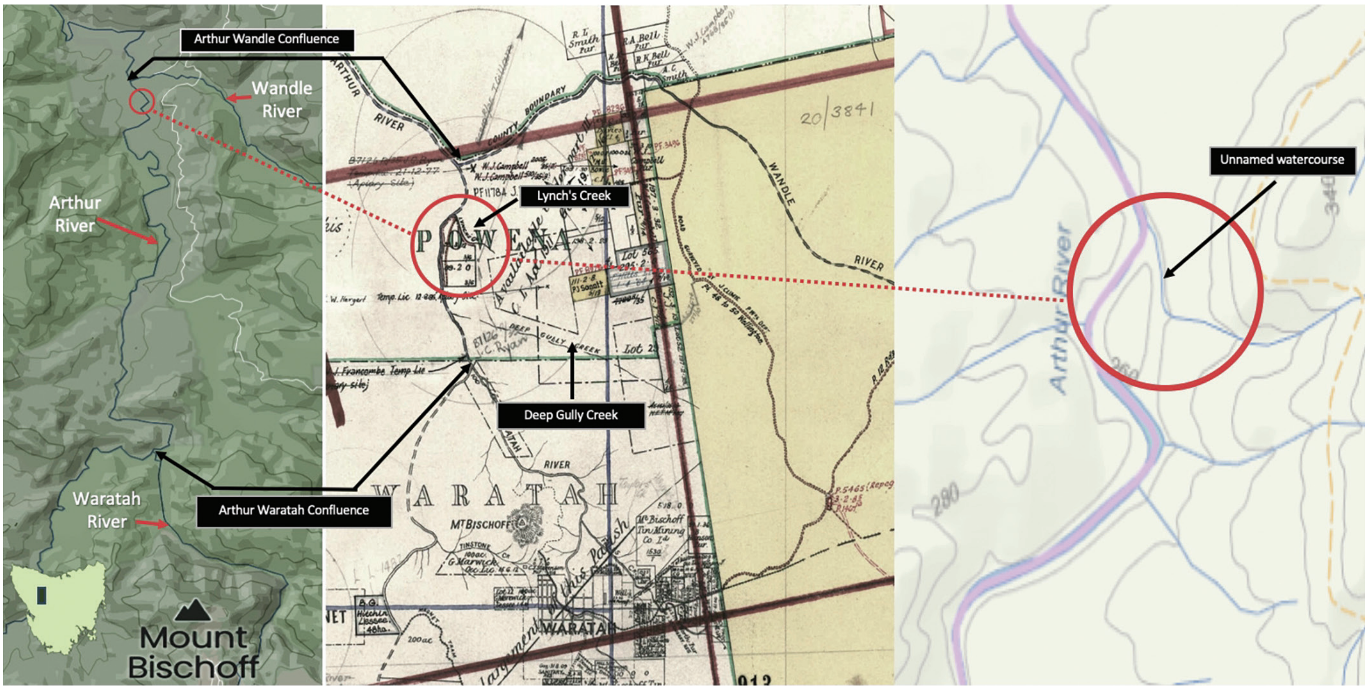

Arthur Wandle Confluence
Wandle River
Arthur River
Lynch's Creek
Deep Gully Creek
Arthur Waratah Confluence
Waratah River
Mount Bischoff
POWENA
WARATAH
MT BISCHOFF
Unnamed watercourse
Arthur River
280
260
340

Figure 13. Left: Approximate location of Penney's Flats in relation to the Arthur, Wandle & Waratah rivers and Mt. Bischoff (Topographical map extract courtesy: mapcarta.com). Centre: Lynch's Creek forming the northern boundary of Penney's Flats as shown on the Russell County Map (Extract courtesy: Libraries Tasmania, Ref: 1A, AF820-1-113). Right: Unnamed watercourse (Map extract courtesy: Land Information Systems Tasmania).

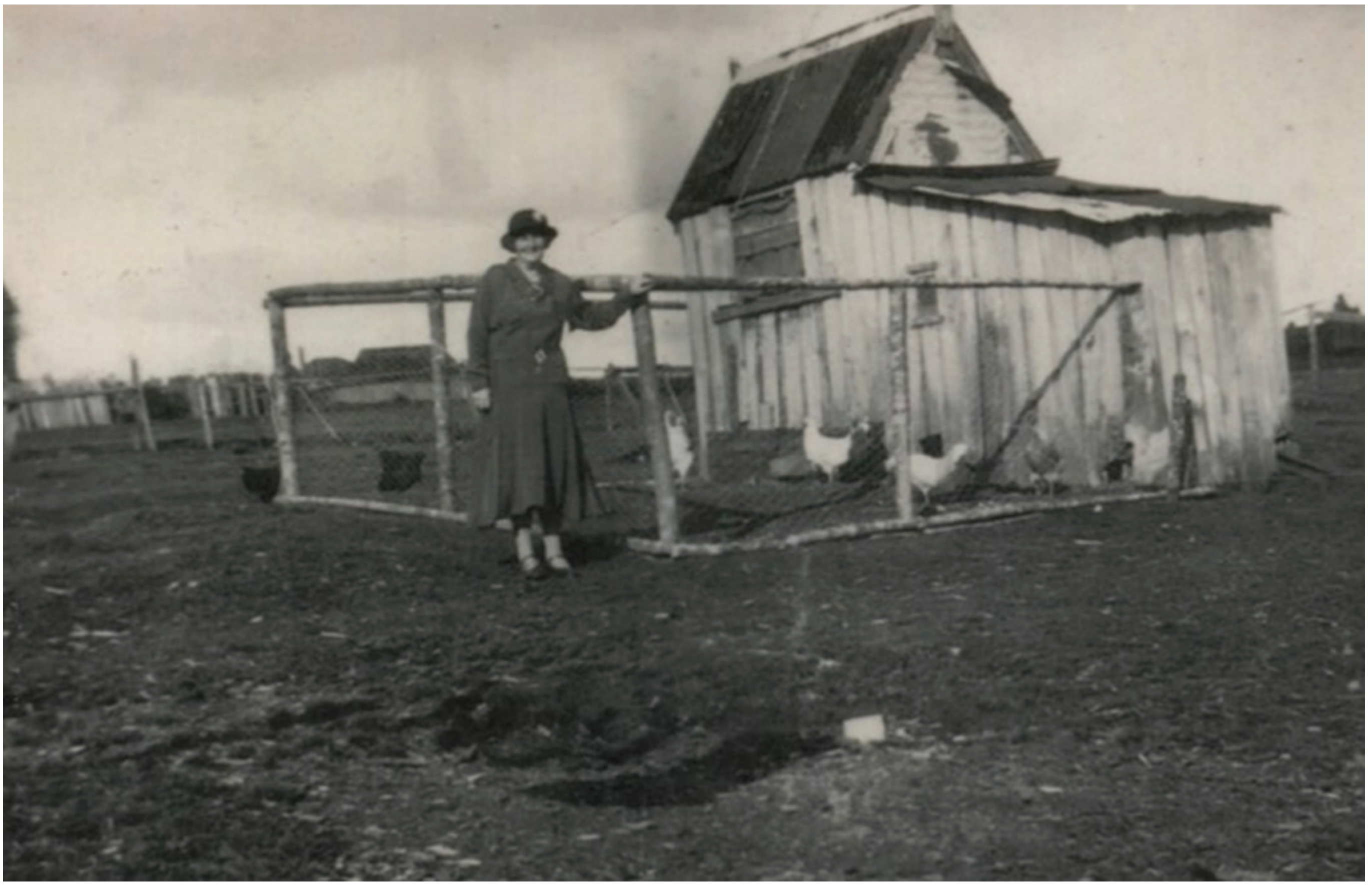
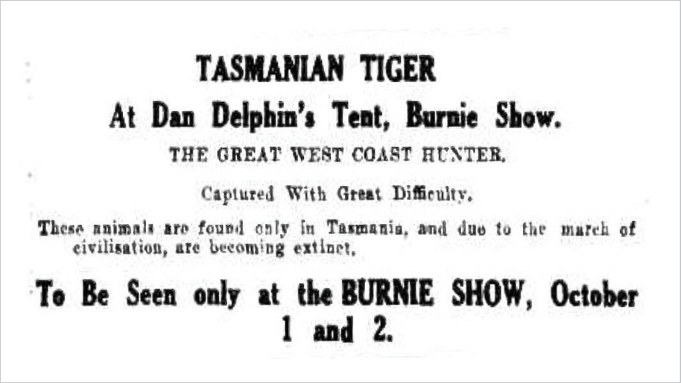


Figure 14. Dorothy Delphin with the pigeon loft / chicken coop on the Delphin farm. Photo courtesy: Delphine Enkler.



TASMANIAN TIGER

At Dan Delphin's Tent, Burnie Show.

THE GREAT WEST COAST HUNTER.

Captured With Great Difficulty.

These animals are found only in Tasmania, and due to the march of civilisation, are becoming extinct.

To Be Seen only at the BURNIE SHOW, October 1 and 2.

Figure 15. Delphin advertisement from the *Advocate* 20/9/1930 (p.13).

would transpire to be their final display at the forthcoming Burnie Show [Fig. 15].

This was the only occasion that any of their displays were advertised in the press and undoubtedly how the HCCRC and Reid[199] became aware of the Delphins' Thylacine. Supporting this assumption, *The Mercury* of the 17th October 1930 (p.8) reported that a Thylacine had been purchased by the zoo between the 5th and 11th October, the week immediately following the Burnie Show. On the 23rd December 1930, approximately two months after the Thylacine's arrival, it was the subject of a 5 second film segment by the Reverend Harold Doyle (Linnard *et al.* 2020)[200], in which the Thylacine is seen pacing energetically back and forth within its enclosure.

1931-1933

Only two references to the Delphin Thylacine have been recovered between the Stewart's visit in March-May 1931 and Fleay's visit in December 1933. An article from the *Weekly Courier* of the 16th December 1931 (p.27) purporting to show: "*Exclusive Animal Studies At Beaumaris Zoo*", included a reproduction of the 1911 Williamson photograph [MRB 29] (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021[a]) captioned with: "*A fine specimen of Tasmanian tiger or marsupial wolf*". The second from *The Mercury* of the 27th January 1933 (p.2) reported that after visiting the zoo Chisholm stated: "*The quarters of the thylacine (Tasmanian tiger) could be improved*" noting that "*he objected to animals being kept on concrete*". Chisholm was not alone in his criticism of the housing of the Thylacine. The poverty of the Thylacine enclosure, estimated at 2.5m x 5.5m x 1.5m in height (Linnard *et al.* 2020) attracted censure from several other witnesses. Watson (1990)[201] recalled the "*… tiny - pitiably tiny - concrete yard with the rusted iron fence*", whilst Sharland (1941) said of Beaumaris' marsupial carnivores that:

> "*The conditions under which the animals were maintained in the defunct Hobart Zoo, kept as they were in a small enclosure with a bare concrete floor, tended to disgust the visitor rather than interest him.* He went on to state in 1962 that: "*It was never an animal that took kindly to captivity at least, of the kind with which it was provided, with no provision of anything matching its native environment*".

1934

On the 3rd February 1934, Fox Movietone cameraman Eric Bierre arrived in Hobart. *The Mercury* of the 6th February 1934 (p.2) noted Beaumaris as being amongst the locations he intended to film. In an interview with Louise Lansley (1978) Bierre recalled:

> "*Two interesting things I filmed at the zoo at Hobart. One was a Tasmanian tiger. He was quite harmless. Very much like a big dog, about the size of an Alsatian, short haired and striped, with a most extraordinary useless thick tail. Like a kangaroo's tail except a kangaroo uses his tail for balance, this thing as far as I could see was just a nuisance. But it was a great thick tail. Where it joined the body it would have been about four or five inches thick, and tapered down, and it was fairly long. And that was the Tasmanian tiger part. I know that the only film still in existence is this one of a Tasmanian tiger*".

By 1934, Fox Movietone had issued their cameramen with equipment incorporating the Movietone Sound System, therefore it is likely that Bierre's film[202] was originally recorded with sound. Whilst Bierre makes no mention of it, at 12, 18-20 and 27-29 seconds, the Thylacine's mouth is seen to be animate, suggesting that it may have been vocalising. Sadly, as the original sound track to the film no longer exists, it is now impossible to confirm if this was indeed the case. Of the seven known films of the Delphin Thylacine, Films 5 and 9 are undated. With respect to film 5, Sleightholme & Campbell (2021[b]) note:

> "*At 35 seconds, Reid can be seen pressing a lamb against the wire enclosure fence. Its head and thick fleece are clearly visible, as is Reid's hand around its neck*".

On the 11th July 1934, the HCCRC minutes record the purchase of a sheep. This payment is listed as part of a series which begin with the payment to Reid for £3/18/11 for "*Petty Cash, Zoo*" and two subsequent payments for "*Shellgrit*" and "*Parrots*".

The authors argue that the sheep's inclusion within these payments confirms that it was purchased for the zoo. Consequently, the authors are able to retrospectively date Film 5 to circa July 1934, making this the only year in which two film sequences of the Delphin Thylacine can be confirmed to have been made. Two months after his visit to Beaumaris in December 1933, Fleay was appointed

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[199] The *Examiner* of the 26/9/1930 (p.6) records that an A. Reid had arrived on the Nairana, indicating that the zoo's curator may have been present in the State's north whilst the Delphin advertisements were in press.

[200] Film 11 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021[b]).

[201] The authors identified multiple inaccuracies in Watson's account.

[202] Films 4 a & b (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021[b]).

curator of Melbourne Zoo's '*Australian Animals*' section[203]. In June 1934, desirous to obtain a pair of Thylacines for breeding purposes, Fleay contacted the State Premiere who redirected his enquiry to the Fauna Board for permission to be granted to capture and transfer a pair to Melbourne[204]. Covering their response and reflecting on the species rarity the *Advocate* of the 4th July 1934 (p.7) stated:

> *"The only known Tasmanian tiger in captivity is that at Beaumaris Zoo, Hobart".*

In December 1934[205], Reid made a brief mention of the Thylacine:

> *"The two principle attractions in the zoo, said Mr Reid, are the Marsupial wolf and the Tasmanian devil. The wolf is one of the oldest types of mammal, and he has a reptilian tail which he cannot wag. He is the only one in captivity in the world, and we could sell him anywhere, but I would not like to see him go. The wolf does not live to a great age, and is not a prolific breeder, the young will still be being suckled at 18 months".*

1935

In or around March 1935, the Brisbane cinematographer Sidney Cook visited Beaumaris. He captured 21 seconds of footage[206] of the Delphin Thylacine moving around within its enclosure with Arthur Reid and keeper Albert Brett striking the mesh in an effort to stimulate the animal for the camera. In Cook's film, the Thylacine appears unchanged from the films of 1933 and 1934. On the 12th April 1935, *The Mercury* (p.7) reported that Japanese activist Dr. Toyohiko Kagawa had visited Beaumaris and had been: "*... intrigued to observe the Tasmanian tiger and Tasmanian devil*". In July 1935, Reid was required to prepare a report on the cost of feeding the zoo's carnivores. This was undertaken in response to the escalating financial crisis at Beaumaris resulting from a decline in visitor numbers. From this report we can determine that the Thylacine was fed 3lbs of meat per day at a cost of 4 shillings per week. Fleay (1934) refrained from commenting on the conditions at Beaumaris, however in Fleay-Thompson (2007) he is quoted as recalling:

> *"How I longed to get this evidently hungry animal across the Bass Strait for specialist housing and feeding".*

The quality of the food supplied to Beaumaris' Thylacines, or for that matter the other carnivores, is not recorded. However, the HCCRC regularly changed suppliers and accepted the lowest available quotes. Cramp (Rheinberger, 2013), who as a child visited the zoo each Sunday, recalled the Thylacine as being a "*most friendly animal*", but one whom the keepers were cautious of. As part of his weekly visit Cramp stated that he assisted with the feeding of the animals and described the Thylacine's fare as mostly beef: "*...soup bones with plenty of meat on them, or lamb clippings*". He also noted that occasionally the meat was mixed with: "*....a kind of meal*", which "*...he wouldn't like much, but he'd eat it*". Cramp's testimony was recovered at least 77 years after the events, so a degree of caution is required in assessing his recollections.

1936

Whilst in Cook's 1935 film the Thylacine appears to be in good health, two photographs from 1936 portray a visible deterioration in the animal's condition. The first captured in January 1936 (HBZ 34) [Fig. 16] appears to show a loss of muscle mass around the Thylacine's flank, its pelvis being noticeably prominent, as is swelling to the left knee. Whilst the second image from May 1936 (HBZ 1) [Fig. 17] shows the Thylacine in what could only be termed as an emaciated state. There is loss of muscle mass in the face, the eyes appear unusually deep set and the rear left foot contacting the ground along its full length indicates that the animal may be lame. Its coat also looks to be in poor condition when compared to the Fleay images. The suggestion that the Thylacine had become infirm is supported by Sharland (1962) who described him as a: "*... lame and lonely creature*". Watson (1994) referred to the animal's: "*...rickety hind legs*". Guiler (1986) states: "*Those who saw it in its last years remember it as a rather old mangy-looking animal*". With reference to captive Thylacines, stereotypic behaviour has not been reliably recorded on film. However, two witnesses referred to the animal's incessant pacing. Waterworth stated: "*..it will pace up and down, its whole body expressing the devastating misery it feels*"[207], whilst Cramp (Rheinberger, 2013) recalled that it paced: "*..up and down, up and down*".

1937

Following the death of the Delphin male, *The Mercury* of the 26th March 1937 (p.14) published a strongly worded objection by women's columnist Edith Waterworth to the zoo acquiring another Thylacine:

> *"...from the sight of a native tiger fretting its life away in a den - well, a student might just as reasonably hope to perfect his knowledge of human capabilities and characteristics by staring at a homicidal maniac confined in a strait jacket".*

Neglect or Senescence?

Whilst it is no longer apparent whether Paddle (see: Paddle & Medlock, 2023) adheres to the belief that the last captive died as a direct result of neglect (Paddle, 2000), this scenario has been widely repeated and as such requires addressing. Paddle (2000) states:

> *"September, and the new spring season arrived, with the*

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[203] *The Herald*, 27/2/1934, p.5.

[204] *The Mercury*, 4/7/1934, p.9.

[205] *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail*, 13/12/1934, p.26.

[206] Film 10 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021b).

[207] *The Mercury*, 11/3/1937, p.10.

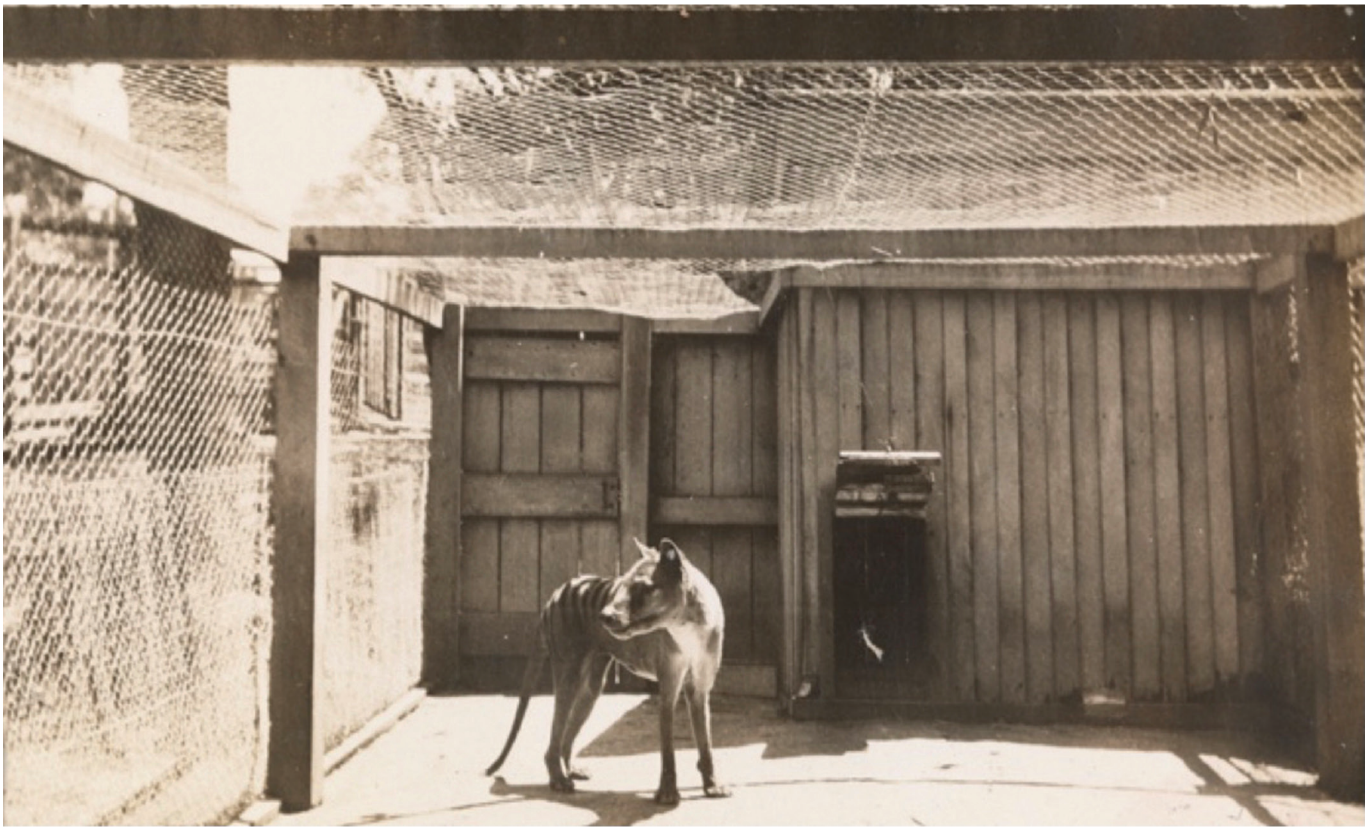

Figure 16. HBZ 34. Photo: John McDowell. Courtesy: Libraries Tasmania (Ref: LPIC143-1-1).

> *deciduous tree covering the thylacine enclosure still leafless from the winter. Locked out of her den, the thylacine remained at the mercy of the weather. In the last ten days of her life, minimum daily ambient temperatures varied from freezing 32°F (0° C) to 46°F (8° C), and a maxima from 47°F (8° C) to 63°F (17° C); while on the floor of the open cage, thermal conductivity ranged from a terrestrial minimum 26°F (42° C), to a solar radiation maximum of 107°F (42° C), [Hobart Mercury, 31 August 1936 to 9 September 1936]. Without access to her den, the thylacine was unshaded from the sun by day, and shelter less from the cold by night, Thus, unprotected and exposed, the last known thylacine whimpered away during the night of 7th September 1936".*

With reference to Fleay's film[208], thereby confirming that he was referring to the male subject of the Sheppard photograph, he also notes:

> *"The film, together with other still photographs, clearly identifies the last specimen as a mature but relatively young female".*

Paddle's somewhat emotive account of the last captive's death has since entered public consciousness through repetition in both popular and authoritative sources. However, it is now known to contain multiple errors. In addition to the misrepresentation of the Thylacine's age and sex, the authors note further areas of concern.

There is no reference to support the existence of a "*deciduous tree*" which sheltered the enclosure and no obvious source by which this could have been determined. Of the two trees adjacent to the enclosure that are visible in the surviving photographic images, one situated at the west side still stands and is a eucalyptus. The second, located by the east face, no longer remains and is not visible beyond its trunk in any image. However, HBZ 30 [Fig. 8] shows the detritus from this tree entangled in the enclosure's mesh canopy and the leaves are clearly identifiable as being eucalyptus. Consequently, as eucalypts are evergreen and shed their mature leaves throughout the year, the enclosure would have always had some degree of shade.

By far the most contentious element of Paddle's account, that the Thylacine was "*locked out*" of its night den is presented without support. In the absence of any evidence the authors attempted to identify a potential source, but can propose none. Alison Reid had vacated the curator's cottage by September 1936 and had no connection to Beaumaris by that time. The two keepers, Albert Brett and J. Fleming[209] [Fig. 18], the only members of staff with direct contact with the animals, began their day at 8am prior to the arrival of the zoo's other staff[210] and would have been first on site to have found the body, but neither is known to have left any testimony.

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[208] Film 6 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021b).

[209] Fleming's forename has not been recovered.

[210] HCCRC: 28/8/1935.

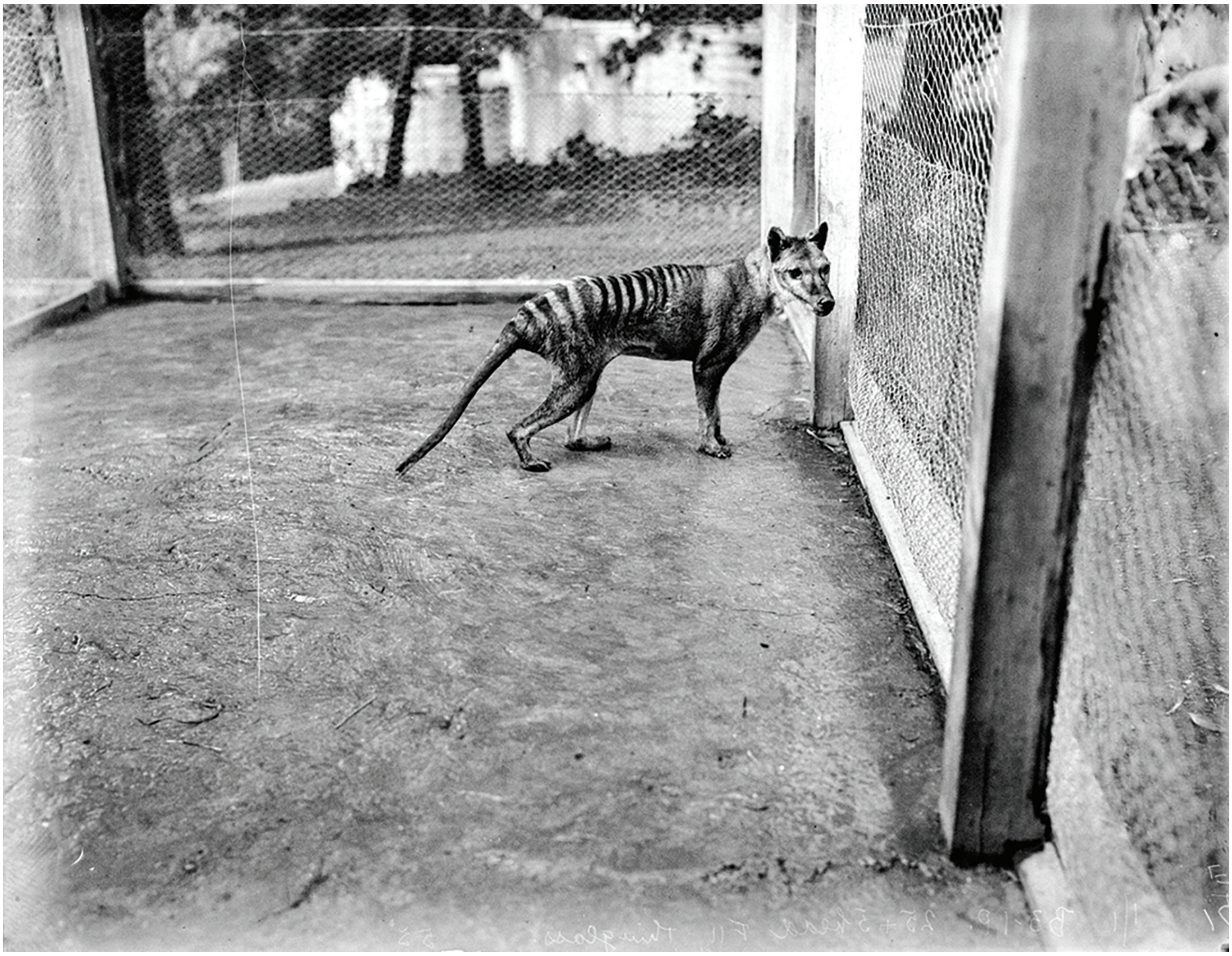

Figure 17. HBZ 1. Photo: Ben Sheppard. Courtesy: Libraries Tasmania (Ref: NS1298-1-1880).

Further, the sole primary reference to provide the time of the Thylacine's death, the HCCRC minutes, states that the death occurred on the "*evening*" of the 7th and not overnight between the 7th and the 8th. Consequently, there is no possible source to support the assertion that the last captive was allowed to die of neglect as a result of being denied access to its sleeping enclosure. The resultant myth that the world's last captive Thylacine was so disregarded is a serious issue, with significant implications for how the evidence regarding the species as a whole is interpreted. The authors question why such an unevidenced conclusion was included in an authoritative work and why it subsequently entered the wider literature without challenge. In reality, contrary to the impression created by Paddle of a neglected animal, the Thylacine was regarded as the most valuable specimen in the zoo's collection. The HCCRC minutes of the 19th February 1936 contains a draft report outlining the committee's attempt to save the then ailing zoo. Amongst the main recommendations was that a ban be placed on the acquisition of: "*…carnivora or other large foreign animals*" and that: "*…the council is in honour bound to keep a collection of Tasmanian Birds and Animals at least up to the standard of that originally presented by Miss Roberts*". Consequently, by 1936 the Thylacine was the only high valued species eligible to be replaced by the zoo.

By January 1936, a simple opening and closing mechanism had been fitted to the door of the night pen[211] [Fig. 19]. This allowed the door to be raised and lowered from outside the enclosure by means of a wire attached to a weighted metal pipe fixed to the lower part of the hatch which ran up and out through the upper mesh. The weight of the pipe would have allowed the hatch to be dropped closed when the wire was released eliminating the need for a latch, of which there is no evidence. Consequently, the keepers would only have had to pull the wire on their late afternoon or early evening rounds to safely secure the Thylacine for the night.

A final objection to the '*locked out*' scenario can be found within the photographic record. Of the 43 known instances when Beaumaris' Thylacines were filmed or

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[211] Images HBZ 3 & 4 show the door to the night enclosure open at 90 degrees during the 1920s, suggesting that a similar mechanism had been in place for a considerable time before January 1936. HBZ 21 show the hatch open at approximately 170 degrees.

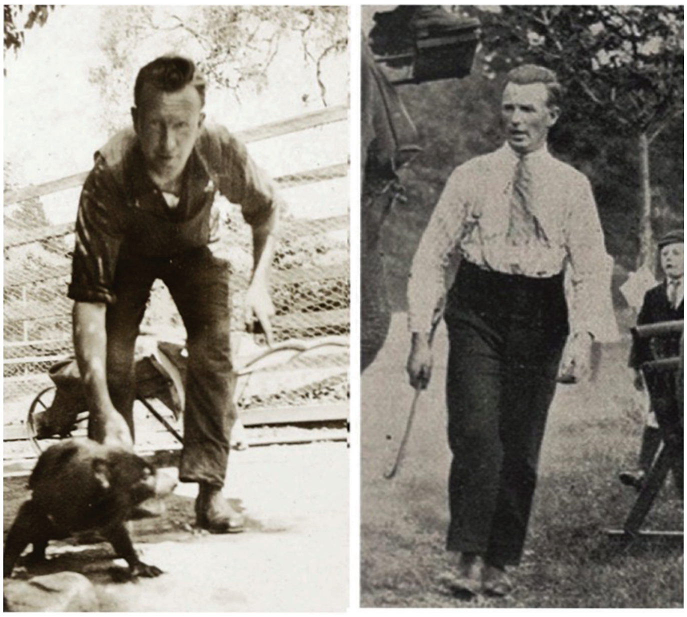

Figure 18. Beaumaris keepers - J. Fleming (left) and Albert Brett (right). Photographs courtesy: Libraries Tasmania (Ref: LPIC143) & *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail*, 3/10/1928, p.43.

photographed, the position of the hatch to the night den is visible on 10 occasions[212, 213]. Of these, it is open in six[214]. All but one of the four closed images (HBZ 8) were taken by professional photographers, whilst five of the six images showing the hatch in the open position were taken by unknown or amateur photographers.

The authors argue that no special accommodations were made for photography by the zoo's casual visitors, suggesting that it was most likely they who captured the enclosure in its everyday state, and that the zoo's Thylacines were routinely displayed with the hatch open.

Whilst there is no evidence to support a single direct act of neglect, two accounts can be linked to the death of the last captive Thylacine. The first, by political activist Edith Waterworth (1937) states:

> *"The frozen despair which its face and its whole body expressed would wring the heart of any person not entirely without imagination. Its frenzy was over, it had refused to eat, but the sight of it will live in my memory to the end of my life".*

While this individual is not specifically identified as the last captive, as Waterworth's dealings with the zoo occurred primarily, if not entirely, during the 1930s, it seems most likely that it was.

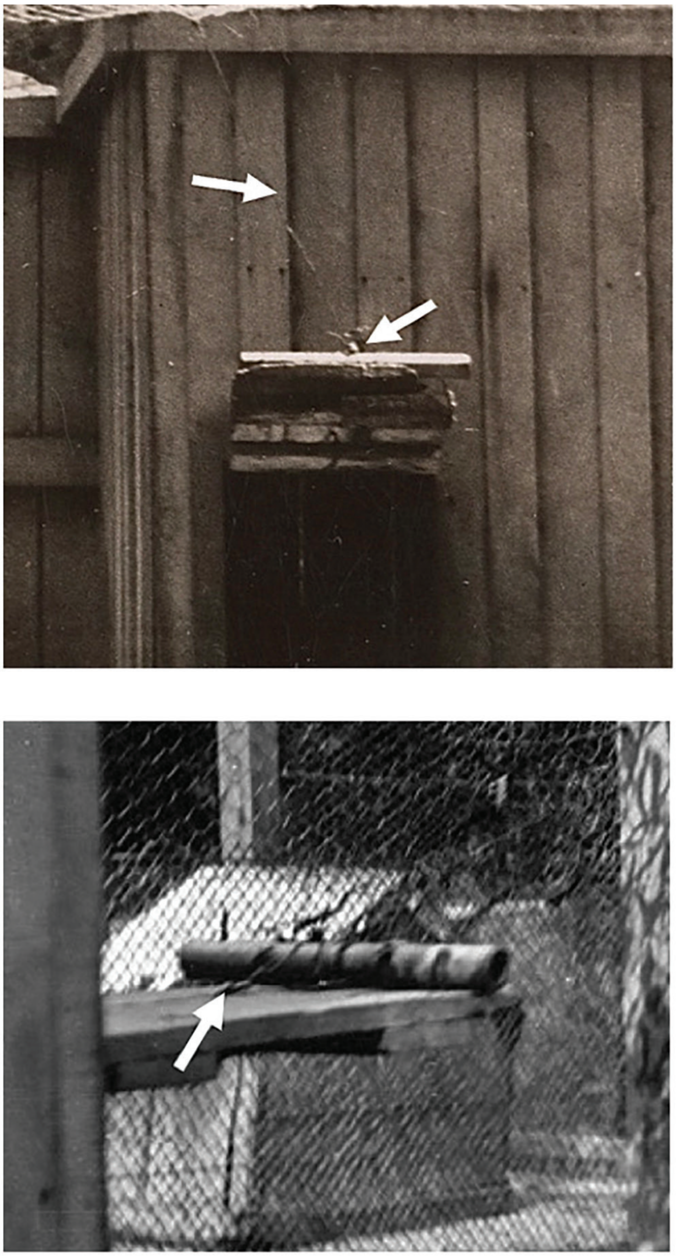

Figure 19. Cropped images (HBZ 34 & HBZ 8) showing the wire opening mechanism (white arrows) to the hatch of the night den in the Thylacine enclosure.

A definite reference to Beaumaris' last Thylacine came from Alderman Samuel Crisp, who stated that it had: "…*fretted itself to death*" (*Mercury*, 9/3/1937, p.2). It is important to consider the context in which these statements were made. Waterworth and Crisp were amongst the zoo's most ardent and longstanding critics and their statements were made during the time the HCCRC were attempting to replace the last captive Thylacine. They are both on record as objecting to the amount of public money Beaumaris' continuance required and were well informed as to the situation at the zoo. Consequently, had the last captive died from neglect, it is certain that both Crisp and Waterworth would have made political capital out of that fact. That they did not is significant. Instead, their statements seem to infer

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[212] Film 3 (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2021b) shows the hatch open; however, the animals are being ushered into their night den by the keepers from within the enclosure.

[213] HBZ 2; HBZ 3; HBZ 4; HBZ 8; HBZ 21; HBZ 30; HBZ 34 & Films 3, 4, 5 & 11.

[214] HBZ 3; HBZ 4; HBZ 21; HBZ 30; HBZ 34 & Film 11.

a progressive deterioration in the animal's condition consistent with its advancing age.

The questionable fate of the remains of the last captive?

The authors contest the evidence provided by Paddle & Medlock (2023) for the arrival of an elderly female at the zoo in May 1936, so our assessment of the fate of any remains will concentrate on the body of the Delphin male, the only verifiable contender for being the last captive specimen. As can be confirmed from the entry in the HCCRC minutes of the 16th September 1936, its body was unquestionably forwarded from the zoo. The authors concur with Paddle & Medlock, that the museum's correspondence regarding requests for Thylacine material[215] which, it should be noted, Pearson was unwilling to supply, indicates that if the body of the last captive had arrived at TMAG, then it should still be there today. Yet, no trace can be found of the last captive's distinctive zig-zag stripe pattern [Fig. 1] on any of the skins in the TMAG collection, and as far as is known, no physical trace or archival record can be found of any of its osteological remains. In isolation, the most likely interpretation of the statement "*forwarded to the Museum*" would appear to be that the receiving institution was TMAG, thereby creating an apparent paradox. However, illustrating the importance of context, evidence based identification can be made for the remains of only one[216] of the eleven documented Thylacines[217] acquired by Beaumaris entering a museum's collection, thereby raising equally valid questions as to the fate of eight[218] of the remaining specimens[219]. The authors would argue that to conclude that the evidence within the HCCRC minutes suggests that "*the Museum*" necessarily refers to TMAG is premature, and that a potential explanation for the loss of all but one of Beaumaris' specimens[220] lies within its correct interpretation.

A request by Pearson confirms that despite the remains of a Thylacine having been documented by the HCCRC as being sold to "*the Museum*"[221] during 1928 or 1929, until at least the 27th March 1935, TMAG had not been the default recipient of the zoo's Tasmanian specimens:

> *"The Director of the Museum & Art Gallery (Dr. Pearson) asked if the Council would place at the disposal of the Museum any remains of carcasses which might die at the Zoo. He understood that these carcasses were sent to the Mainland then, but it would be of great value to the Museum if it could have the right to make use of them in future".*

Reid's reply clarifies that "*the Mainland*" was a reference to the National Museum of Australian Zoology in Canberra, which by 1935 was known as the Australian Institute of Anatomy (AIA), and the institutions' director, Sir Colin MacKenzie, with whom Beaumaris had a longstanding working arrangement:

> *"With regard to the request made by the Museum for the carcasses of any animals that might die, the Curator of the Zoo reported that Canberra Museum years ago offered to purchase any specimens of Tasmanian animals, but it was 7 years since anything was sent. Both the Canberra Museum and Mr. Clive Lord had each paid £5 for the body of a wolf. No bodies have left the Zoo since that time, there being so few deaths among the rarer animals. The Curator was of the opinion that the Museum should pay for any bodies supplied. Decided to reply to the writers that the matter would be kept in mind, and the Curator would report when deaths occurred. Each case to be dealt with on its merits"*[222].

Neither Reid nor the HCCRC appear eager to accommodate Pearson[223], raising the question as to which institution was most closely aligned with the zoo. The authors suggest that the closest and most important working relationship was not with TMAG, whose remit and that of the zoo seldom coincided, but with the mainland zoos on whom Beaumaris relied upon for exchanges and which Reid believed were central to the zoo's operation. On this basis, whilst relations with TMAG were likely to have been cordial, the museum offered no obvious benefit to Beaumaris. However, it was in the zoo's interests to accommodate MacKenzie, who in addition to being the Director of the AIA had also been President of the body which administered the Melbourne Zoo, the Royal Zoological and Acclimatisation Society of Victoria during 1923, and was its Vice President between 1924 and 1936[224], with which frequent exchanges were made.

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[215] The archive of Pearson's correspondence contains seven refusals to supply Thylacine material from 10/2/1935 to the 5/1/1945, and eight requests for osteological specimens between 7/7/1939 and 11/3/1946.

[216] After its death in 1931, the remains of one of the two females supplied by Beaumaris to the Regent's Park Zoo (London) via animal dealer G. B. Chapman in July 1925 can be traced to the University Museum of Natural History in Oxford and the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology in the USA (Sleightholme & Campbell, 2023).

[217] 1) HCCRC: 5/6/1923; *The Mercury*, 20/6/1923, p.5; Crawford, 1951 & QVMAG Thylacine reports Ref: NS463-1-1. 2) *The Mercury*, 7/7/1923; HCCRC: 3/7/1923 & HCCRC: 11/9/1923. 3-6) *The Mercury*, 12/2/1924, p.6 & HCCRC: 19/2/1924. 7-9) *The Mercury*, 5/8/1924, p.7 & HCCRC: 19/8/1924. 10) HCCRC: 20/7/1925 & HCCRC: 18/8/1925. 11) *The Mercury*, 17/10/1930, p.8 & HCCRC: 30/10/1930.

[218] The two specimens sent to London in July 1925 and the last captive are excluded from this total.

[219] Paddle & Medlock (2023) state: "*During the years 1926 to 1928, the museum had acquired three thylacines, a large wild-caught adult male, a juvenile female and a small adult female, (both from Hobart Zoo)*". Whilst the wild caught male is identifiable as the Hartnett specimen (A1298), no juvenile specimens were on display at Beaumaris during 1928. The sole death recorded within the HCCRC minutes was of an aged three legged female recorded on 27/3/1928. Given both taxidermies retain all their limbs, neither could relate to this specimen. Further, the only other female present during this period was an extremely robust specimen acquired in 1924 whose stripe pattern does not match either mount, or for that matter any specimen held at TMAG.

[220] The authors do not dismiss the possibility that some of these specimens may be within TMAG's collection.

[221] Reid (HCCRC: 14/10/1925) stated that "...*the Canberra Museum and Mr. Clive Lord had each paid £5 for the body of a wolf*" around 1928. The deaths of two of the three Thylacines held at Beaumaris are recorded in the HCCRC minutes (27/3/928 & 1/11/1929, reiterated on 2/4/1930 & 14/4/1930). These are both recorded as being sold to "*the Museum*" for £10 and £5 respectively. The authors argue that this suggests that on one or both of these occasions the National Museum of Australian Zoology was referred to as "*the Museum*".

[222] HCCRC: 10/4/1935.

[223] The history of relations between zoo and museum's directors regarding Thylacines had never been in the former's favour. In 1925, Clive Lord had been one of the members of the Advisory Board which had vetoed the zoo sending a male to London, thereby causing irritation to a valuable supplier (G. B. Chapman). In 1937, the Fauna Board on which Pearson sat, had granted permission to TMAG to obtain a dead specimen, and had not rescinded permission to supply Fleay with a live specimen granted in 1934, yet they threatened to prosecute the HCCRC for attempting to secure a Thylacine.

The two leading authorities on the Thylacine, Eric Guiler (1922-2008) and Heinz Moeller (1936-2009), both privately expressed doubt that the body of the last captive ever reached TMAG, with Moeller postulating that it may have been sent to MacKenzie:

> "Eric [Guiler] *told me some time ago that he had conducted a thorough search of the Tasmanian Museum records and could find no evidence that the museum received the body. There is no correspondence, no payments and no accession records in their registers, which must cast considerable doubt as to whether the body was sent there. I find it hard to believe that the body was simply discarded, so could it have been sent elsewhere? It was certainly not sent to Adelaide, Melbourne or Sydney, so could MacKenzie have been the recipient for the body to be harvested for its organs? At the time of writing, I do not have an answer to this question*" (Moeller, pers., com., 1/11/2006).

In support of Guiler's statement, Paddle & Medlock (2023) also note that they were unable to find any entry in the "*zoological collection registers*" for the arrival of the Thylacine at the museum and confirm this by stating that:

> "*There was no formal record or acknowledgment of the arrival of the last thylacine at the museum*".

Consequently, aside from the disputed taxidermist report (see: Paddle & Medlock (2023) – Interpretation of the Cunningham Report), agreement exists that there is currently no known archival evidence to support that the last captive was transferred to TMAG. Whilst this is significant, its evidential value is undermined by an absence of context. There is no evidence as to the general completeness of TMAG's acquisition registers, nor whether they were more or less rigorously maintained under Pearson than they had been under Lord. Consequently, it cannot be determined whether the absence of such a record is significant. With reference to MacKenzie's work, Sleightholme (2023) notes:

> "*MacKenzie's work focused entirely on the anatomical attributes of his specimens. Unfortunately, this constraint reduced their value from a scientific perspective, as he failed to keep detailed records for each specimen, only labelling them with a brief description of the organ preserved, and the common name of the animal donor*".

MacKenzie was an influential and frequent purchaser of Thylacines[225]. Had he received the body, this would readily explain the absence of any physical or archival evidence. However, whilst this possibility would appear to solve one potential problem, it simultaneously raises another. Exporting the body of a Thylacine to the mainland in 1936 without the permission of the Fauna Board, which they were unlikely to have granted, was illegal. Further, examination of the minutes of the Fauna Board's meetings from September 1936 to March 1937 reveals no evidence of them ever being consulted on such a matter, or that they were aware that such a transfer had taken place. There can be no doubt that the Fauna Board were contemporaneously aware of the last captive's death. On the 3rd October 1936[226], Chisholm stated that the Board's secretary (A. P. Andrewartha) whom he met "*recently*" at a conservation conference in Melbourne had informed him that:

> "*No Zoo anywhere has a specimen of the curious animal, the one held by the Hobart Zoo having died some time ago*".

The conference's Tasmanian delegation also comprised Lord and Pearson, confirming that both men would also have been aware of its death. Yet, no record is available of any action or comment to the effect that such a valuable specimen had possibly been illegally exported from the state. Whilst a precedent exists for an apparent lack of regard or awareness of such legislation on the part of the HCCRC through its public attempts, until it was threatened with prosecution, to procure a specimen in 1937, it also demonstrates the Fauna Board's willingness to act against them. However, it may be that whilst the Fauna Board were willing to prosecute the HCCRC, they may have been less inclined to act in the case of the law being violated by a Federal institution.

Whilst there is no direct evidence in Pearson and De Bavey (1953) to confirm that TMAG had not received the body of the last captive Thylacine, had it done so, the failure not to have acknowledged this in the introductory paragraph of their paper seems somewhat remiss:

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[224] Issues 60-71 of the *Annual Report of the Royal Zoological & Acclimatisation Society of Victoria*, Museums Victoria; *The Age*, 29/2/1936, p.22.

[225] On the 11/5/1928, Harrison's notebook records the sale of a Thylacine to MacKenzie. Paddle (2012) suggests that he purchased six live specimens which were displayed at Melbourne Zoo. *The Telegraph*, 1/9/1927 (p.15) identified one of Melbourne's specimens as MacKenzie's property, whilst the HCCRC (27/3/1928) states Pearson had suggested that he understood MacKenzie was the usual recipient of their Tasmanian specimens.

[226] *The Australasian*, 3/10/1936, p.50.

> *"This interesting marsupial is confined to Tasmania though it once lived on the Australian mainland. It is now, unfortunately, very rare and almost extinct. So far as is known a specimen has not been captured for at least twenty-five years though from time to time reports come in of specimens having been seen. Perhaps a dozen such reports have been received at the Tasmanian Museum in the last twenty years, many of them being most unreliable. However, until about 1920 Thylacinus was occasionally killed or captured and there can be no doubt that in the early settlement days in Tasmania, it was fairly common, so common in fact that it proved to be a menace as a sheep-slayer and a price was actually placed upon its head. Looking back, it is amazing to contemplate that no Australian zoologists took advantage of the presence of this rare form to make a serious study of its anatomy while specimens were readily procurable. The result has been that no account of the female urogenital system has hitherto been published. The only account of its internal anatomy was made by Professor D. J. Cunningham (father of Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham) from material collected by the "Challenger" Expedition. Unfortunately Cunningham's admirable paper dealt with a male specimen".*

The period of "*twenty years*" covers the entire duration Pearson had spent in Tasmania. Had his experience of the species rarity, the spurious reports it had generated, and the lack of preserved material been deemed significant enough to be included in his paper, the failure to refer to what would have been the most significant of his experiences with the Thylacine, the receipt of a specimen in September 1936, appears to confirm that no such acquisition took place.

In summary, the authors argue that the absence of the last captive's remains do not present a paradox, instead they are entirely characteristic of the lack of clarity regarding the fates of Thylacine specimens from this era, and that this is consistent with them having been sent to MacKenzie. However, due to inconsistencies in cataloguing, the authors cannot exclude the possibility that some osteological remains of the last captive are held at TMAG without a re-examination of the original acquisition information and a thorough assessment of the contextual evidence. Until such issues are resolved, the final documents of the last captive Thylacine remain the May 1936 Sheppard photograph and the HCCRC minutes entry of the 16th September 1936.

Conclusion

The Thylacine, like the dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*) and passenger pigeon (*Ectopistes migratorius*) before it, has now become an icon of anthropogenic extinction. It is therefore important that any account of its demise is grounded in evidence and not conjecture. Establishing a correct life and capture history for the last known Thylacines is not merely an esoteric exercise, nor is it purely a matter of historical interest. The authors argue that when conducted with the necessary rigour, such research can provide an accurate chronological and geographic insight into the species in its final days.

With reference to the last captive specimen, a surviving pup from the Mullins family group (Guiler, 1986 & Bailey, 2001) can be eliminated by virtue of the presence of a snare scar and Guiler's improbable life span for the species. As for Churchill's alleged second capture in 1933 (Smith, 1981 & Paddle, 2000), or for that matter in 1936 (Paddle & Medlock, 2023), there is simply no credible evidence to support that these events ever took place. The 1931 Kaine specimen (Sleightholme *et al.*, 2020), although now believed to be the last verifiable capture, can also be duly dismissed on the grounds of an unrealistic purchase price, and that the recently recovered Stewart film confirms the arrival of the last captive no later than mid-May 1931. In that light, all the evidence corroborates that the last captive Thylacine to be displayed at the Beaumaris Zoo was that sold by the Delphins for £25 in mid - October 1930 (Linnard *et al.*, 2020). Consequently, the 2023 revision of the Thylacine Image Registry (TIR) has been amended with images HBZ: 1, 2, 3, 6, 11-16, 22, 26-27, previously labelled as the Kaine specimen, now reassigned as depicting the Delphin male. The Delphin Thylacine was caught on the evening of Monday the 7th July 1930. The Thylacine was a juvenile male aged approximately 18 months at the time it was sold to the zoo. It was captured at Penney's Flats in a snare by the right rear leg, a scar it would carry for the rest of its life. Between its capture and eventual sale, it was shown at various country fairs as a penny attraction. It was first filmed by the Reverend Harold E. S. Doyle on the 23rd December 1930 and subsequently by Stewart (1931) Fleay (1933), Bierre (1934), Bester (c.1933-1936) and Cook (1935), the complex zig-zag interconnecting stripe pattern along its back confirming it to be the same Thylacine throughout. One other film exists (Film 5) where the cinematographer is unknown, but which can now be accurately dated to 1934. The Delphin Thylacine was also photographed on at least 13 occasions, the most publicised images being the Fleay series from December 1933 and the Sheppard photograph from May 1936. This photograph is particularly poignant in that it shows the animal emaciated and close to the end of its life. It is also the last photograph of a living Thylacine known to exist. The Delphin Thylacine died on the evening of the 7th September 1936 aged approximately 7 years and 6 months.

The complete captive history of Beaumaris' last Thylacine is now known, documented in both photograph and film from its arrival as a juvenile in October 1930 to three to four months before its death in September 1936. These precious images and the surviving documentary evidence concerning this individual are an important part of Australia's natural heritage and a poignant reminder of the frailty of island populations and how easily they can be extinguished.

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APPENDIX I

History of the Last Captive Thylacine in Publication

Author	Publication	Sex	Captor	Year	Capture Location	Date of Death	Reference	Price	Arrival reported in press
Fleay	1934	Male	N/S	1930	N/S	N/A	The Australasian, 20/1/1934, p.43.	N/S	The Mercury, 17/10/1930, p.8.
Chisholm	1936	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	1936?	The Australasian, 3/10/1936, p.50	N/S	N/A
Ryan	1937	N/S	N/S	1928	N/S	1936?	The Mercury, 10/02/1937, p.12.	N/S	N/A
Sharland	1937	N/S	N/S	1928	N/S	1936?	The Mercury, 20/2/1937, p.5.	N/S	N/A
Fleay	1937	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	1936?	Table Talk, 1/10/1937, p.37	N/S	N/A
Sharland	1939	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	1935	The Mercury, 25/3/1939, p.5.	N/S	N/A
Fleay	1940	Male	N/S	1930	N/S	1934	The Australasian, 30/3/1940, p.36.	N/S	N/A
Chisholm	1945	N/S	N/S	N/S	N/S	1933	The Herald, 30/10/1945, p.4.	N/S	N/A
Fleay	1950	Male	N/S	N/S	N/S	1933	The Argus, 23/3/1950, p.8.	N/S	N/A
Sharland	1962	N/S	N/S	1933	Florentine Valley	1933	Tasmanian Wildlife: A Popular Account of the Furred Land Mammals, Snakes and Introduced Mammals of Tasmania, An Animal of Antiquity, p.1. Melbourne University Press.	N/S	N/A
Smith	1981	N/S	Elias Churchill	1933	Florentine Valley	9/7/1936	The Tasmanian Tiger (1980): A report on an investigation of the current status of the thylacine (Thylacinus cynocephalus). National Parks and Wildlife Service.	N/S	N/A
Guiler	1986	Male	Walter Mullins	1923	Tyenna	9/7/1936	The Beaumaris Zoo in Hobart. Pap. Proc. Tasm. Hist. Res. Assoc., 33 (4): p.157.	£10 (cub)	The Mercury, 12/2/1924, p.6.

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Author	Publication	Sex	Captor	Year	Capture Location	Date of Death	Reference	Price	Arrival reported in press
Paddle	2000	Female	Elias Churchill	1933	Florentine Valley	9/7/1936	The Last Tasmanian Tiger, The History and Extinction of the Thylacine, Cambridge University Press.	N/S	None
Bailey	2001	Male	Walter Mullins	1923	Tyenna	9/7/1936	Tiger Tales: Stories of the Tasmanian Tiger, p.17. Harper Collins Publishers.	N/S	The Mercury, 12/2/1924, p.6.
Owen (referencing Paddle 2000)	2003	Female	Elias Churchill	1933	Florentine Valley	9/7/1936	Owen, D. 2003. Thylacine - the tragic tale of the Tasmaina tiger, pp.131-134. Allen & Unwin.	N/S	N/A
Sleightholme (referencing Paddle 2000)	2011	Male	Elias Churchill	1933	Florentine Valley	9/7/1936	Sleightholme, S. R. 2011. Confirmation of the gender of the last captive Thylacine, Aust. Zool., 35 (4): pp. 953-956.	N/S	None
Sleightholme, Gordon & Campbell	2020	Male	James Kaine	1931	Preolenna	9/7/1936	Sleightholme, S. R., Gordon, T. J., and Campbell, C. R. 2020. The Kaine capture - questioning the history of the last Thylacine in captivity? Aust. Zool., 41 (1), pp. 1-11.	£8	None
Linnard, Williams & Holmes	2020	Male	Delphin Brothers	1930	Nr. Mount Bischoff	9/7/1936	The parson, the psychiatrist, the publican and his nephews: the two final thylacine captures in Tasmania, Pap. Proc. Tasm. Hist. Res. Assoc., 67 (3), pp. 6–22.	£25	The Mercury, 17/10/1930, p.8.

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Author	Publication	Sex	Captor	Year	Capture Location	Date of Death	Reference	Price	Arrival reported in press
Paddle & Medlock	2023	Female	Elias Churchill	1936	Florentine Valley	9/7/1936	Paddle, R. N. & Medlock, K. M. 2023. The discovery of the remains of the last Tasmanian tiger (Thylacinus cynocephalus), Aust. Zool., Published online 1/5/2023.	£5/-/5	None
Linnard & Sleightholme	2023	Male	Delphin Brothers	1930	Penney's Flats	9/7/1936	Australian Zoologist (in press)	£25	The Mercury, 17/10/1930, p.8.

Commentator	Date of statement	Sex	Captor	Year	Capture location	Date of death	Reference
Algernon Chaplin	1954	N/S	Elias Churchill	1934	Mt. Field	N/S	Chaplin letter, 31/8/1954, TMAG.
Michael Sharland	1972	N/S	N/S	pre-1927	Florentine Valley	N/S	Sharland letter to Dr. R. J. Brown, 17/12/1972, QVMAG: 1998. MS.0061.1.
Victor Stanfield	1981	N/S	Elias Churchill	post-1918	Fitzgerald/Tyenna	N/S	Stanfield letter, 31/8/1981, Libraries Tasmania: NS 896/6.
Alison Reid	6/25/1992	N/S	N/S	1934	Tyenna	N/S	Interview cited in Paddle (2000) p.190
Alison Reid	1996	N/S	N/S	pre-1929	Tyenna	N/S	Mitchells and Sargent 1996, Libraries Tasmania.
William Cramp	2013	Male	N/S	N/S	N/S	1936?	Rheinberger, J. 2013. The Last Tiger in the Zoo: ABC broadcast.

N/S = Not stated.   N/A = Not applicable.   Grey literature = Sources which may be unpublished or not easily accessible.